

# THE ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY NEWS.



CHRISTMAS, 1867.—THE LORD OF MISRULE.



## MY INHERITANCE,

AND

## HOW I CAME BY IT.

It is not many years since I found myself in the city of Mexico, an utter stranger to all within it, with but an indifferent, by which I mean exceedingly limited, knowledge of Mexican-Spanish through which to communicate my hopes and disappointments to others, and put on as in my pocket to defray current charges at a café, while I sojourned in the ancient capital of the Aztecs, and afterwards cover my expenses on the road to Vera Cruz, and thence by steamer to Europe.

While standing within the shadow of the cathedral, which, it is said, occupies the site of the great altar of sacrifice on which the more attractive of the maidens of the land were annually broiled (in the day of Montezuma) in honour of the voracious Mexetli, whose insatiable appetite for human gore was not fully appeased until 1521 A.D., when that ambitious fighter and brilliant fanatic, Cortez, proclaimed himself master of the inhabitants of the valley of the Unahuac, and substituted for the pagan ritual of the Aztecs, the Christian Inquisition, whose ministers, as representatives of a civilised people, introduced a greater variety of modes of torture than their more barbarous slaves had at any time succeeded in inventing.

But I digress. I repeat, while standing listlessly near the portals of the cathedral, wondering what I should do with myself, and what in the way of fortune was in store for me, and where I should establish my headquarters, a beautiful girl, accompanied by an elderly woman, passed near. I never before found myself so utterly captivated—so to speak—fascinated by the glance which this young maiden cast upon me, as she entered the vast building. It said to me plainly almost as words could:—

"Who are you? Why here? Follow me, and seek an opportunity to introduce yourself to me, and, if not too obtrusive, you need not fear repulse."

Without stopping to reflect on the consequences that might arise from an act so rash as the one I contemplated, I quietly followed the girl, whose eyes and hair were black as night; and I could almost aver that the latter was soft as silk, as I knew, from the gentleness of their expression, the former were mild as an antelope's.

On entering the body of the church, the lady walked, without hesitation, to a retired place near a side altar, and there knelt before an image of the Virgin, and, without once casting her eyes behind her, commenced her devotions. The old lady who had accompanied her, a sort of duenna, I was persuaded, relaxed her watch over her young companion at the door, and at once abandoned herself to her religious duties.

I confess I felt somewhat embarrassed. "What," I said to myself, "if I misunderstood that glance? My situation would not be enviable. But faint heart never won fair lady, and I'll see the end of the adventure."

Advancing boldly to the shadowy recess in which the girl was reciting her prayers, I quietly knelt by her side, and waited for an overture. It was not long in coming. Her rosary slipped from her hand upon the stone pavement, and my gallantry impelled me to pick it up and hand it to her. She bowed her head in a quiet way, and continued her devotions.

I saw that she was entirely self-possessed; and did not object to a closer perusal on my part of her sweet face, which, notwithstanding the raven hue of her hair and eyes, was fair as any blonde of Saxony.

"Senorita," I whispered, in my best Spanish, "I am a temporary sojourner in your city, and I trust I have not transgressed the laws of decorum in addressing you. The fact is I am a stranger."

With a peculiar smile, and a quick, though hesitating glance, directed toward the place where her attendant was yet at her devotions, she responded:—

"Senor, I understand, probably better than you do Spanish, your language. Address me in English."

"I am very glad, miss," I said, "that you do; for the truth is I cannot roll your words off my tongue so musically as one born to them. Pardon me, have I not been impertinent in addressing you? I thought I saw something in your looks directed towards me at the great door which invited me to approach you."

"You partly misunderstood me. You bear a wonderful resemblance to a deceased English gentleman, an acquaintance of mine, Mr. Exford, and I was naturally startled when I first looked at you."

"And must our acquaintance end here?"

The lady hesitated a moment before she replied:—  
"I do not know. This is highly improper in me. Are you English? Did you know Mr. Exford? A relation, shall I say, of his?"

"I can only answer affirmatively to one of your questions. I am an Englishman. I never saw the gentleman you speak of. My name is Elleston; and I know not a single person in Mexico."

"From whence?"

"Acapulco. Lately from the Sandwich Islands and California," I answered.

"I am alone at present," she continued—"mistress of my own house. Will you accept of an invitation to enter it as my guest?"

I began to feel some surprise at the nonchalance of the lady in permitting a perfect stranger to address her as I had, and then, without knowing anything further of him, invite him to her dwelling.

"I understand your hesitancy, sir," the senora resumed. "Our customs are not as yours. I am persuaded that you are a gentleman, and that any courtesy I may extend to you will not be abused. I am named Isabella Gallazon."

"Here is an adventure," I said to myself, as the lovely Isabella rose to her feet. "By Jove! I'll accept the lady's hospitality. Who knows how this unlooked-for adventure may end. She is very lovely."

"I will accept of your arm, Mr. Elleston," she said, while a bright smile played upon her countenance. "Together we will go to the house. The lady who accompanied me here is my housekeeper. She will follow us."

My arm was instantly offered to Isabella, and without expressing surprise the housekeeper followed (as if this was an everyday occurrence) her mistress to her residence.

"You no doubt wonder, Mr. Elleston," said Isabella as we moved through the calle St. Augustine towards her home, "at my boldness; but perhaps you will partly excuse it when you learn that my husband was an Englishman."

"You have been married, then?" I cried, in perhaps a disappointed tone of voice. "I never heard of an English gentleman of the name of Gallazon."

"No; I presume not. It is my original name. The story is a brief one. My family were not rich. Mr. Exford saw and admired me when I was scarcely sixteen. He was dying with consumption. He was rich. I liked, but cannot say that I loved him. He interested himself in my education, and personally taught me his own language. On an afternoon, about six months since, he requested my attendance at his apartment. I complied, and on entering found a padre of the church present. I noticed that my friend looked pale—that he was much worse than I had ever before seen him. He said to me, 'Isabella, I have but an hour to live. I have bequeathed you my property; but that there may arise no question as to your right to it on my death, I desire that you should become my wife. For this purpose I have invited this priest to solemnize our union. If you consent, you must swear never to marry again.'

"I very naturally hesitated, but was finally persuaded to become

his wife. Within an hour from the conclusion of the ceremony of marriage, my husband was a corpse. As no one has ever attempted to question the validity of Mr. Exford's testament in my favour, I have not thought it necessary that outside of the church, whose record must be conclusive, I should publish the relationship that exists between the dead and myself. Beside the priest and one other, no one, save yourself, is acquainted with this marriage."

"I shall then continue to address you as Miss Gallazon," I remarked. "But how is it that you unhesitatingly entrust your secrets to me, whom you do not know? May I call you Isabella?"

"You may. I have already given you a reason for my frankness towards you—your remarkable resemblance to my late husband."

"And you desire that this chance acquaintanceship of ours should ripen into positive friendship?"

The young widow paused a moment before she replied:—

"Mr. Elleston, I had rather my husband had lived, and for this reason his wealth does not make me happy. I am my own mistress, it is true, but my family to the fourth degree prey upon me, and, in time, will impoverish me. Let us be friends—confidants, if you will; but I want you to present yourself as Mr. Exford's brother, and, at least, nominally assume charge of the estate for me."

"You amaze me," I exclaimed. "Can you rest secure in my honesty? To tell you the plain truth, I have between me and utter starvation but sixty-four dollars, and with that sum I was, when I just saw your sweet face, figuring my way to Vera Cruz, and thence to my home in England."

"I can trust you," she answered, quietly. "Only permit me to introduce you to my relatives as the brother of my deceased friend."

"But," said I, "how can you place faith in one whom you desire to practice a fraud, by assuming another name, and thus falsely representing him?"

"Because," she answered, "I do not think a gentleman who has sufficient affection for a woman to cause him to seek to make her his friend would betray her."

By this time we had arrived opposite a respectable-looking house, which, my companion informed me, was her residence.

I unhesitatingly entered, and presently was seated by her side at a table that was plentifully supplied with the rich viands gleaned in the vale of the Anahuac.

Towards evening she hinted that I should lodge at a respectable café, and if I wanted money, to draw on her. To this last proposition I, of course, could not assent.

On the day succeeding this remarkable interview I was introduced to the lady's family as the brother of Mr. Exford, and although I saw disappointment written upon the faces of many, I was not discourteously treated. It was understood that my putative brother's property was entirely hers, but, from the hour of my appearance in their midst, they ceased to prey upon the young widow.

My intimacy with the beautiful Isabella daily became closer, and, on my part, warmer. Indeed, I could not but draw the most favourable auguries from her unreserved kindness to me; and so one day I said to her, as I placed an arm around her waist, and held one of her dainty hands in my own:—

"Isabella, I love you with all my heart and soul! I am poor—very poor—in this world's goods; but I have a life that I will devote to your service—to your happiness."

The young girl moved not—neither towards or from me. She permitted my arm, without protest, to encircle her slender zone, and her hand neither moved nor trembled in mine. I looked into her eyes—her soft, black eyes—down, far down; but I saw that I could not fathom, through them, the depths of her soul. It was too profound for me. I waited for a reply to my petition. At length it came in these strange words:—

"George Elleston, do not kiss me—you never have—because my lips belong to the dead! I love—worship you, George! Yes, I take no shame to myself in saying that I have loved you since the day we knelt together before the altar of the Virgin; but I cannot be your wife. I am the bride of the man I revered as a friend, but now know I never loved. There—leave me for to-day. To-morrow you will hear further from me. But, George, whatever happens, of this rest assured—but for the pledge exacted of me by him who honoured me with his hand, I would say yes, my friend, to whatever you might demand of me; for you are of too noble a nature to ask of me aught that would be unwomanly of me to grant. Let me think—yes, to-morrow—"

She gently took her hand away from mine, and, withdrawing her person from my sustaining arm, disappeared from my sight, by at once entering her private apartments.

On the next day, at an early hour, I called at the dwelling of Isabella. I was met by her housekeeper, who wore a sad, pale, frightened face. Emblems of mourning were on the door.

"What do these mean?" I asked, in an alarmed voice; "and why are you so pale?"

"Oh, senor," sobbed the poor woman, "my mistress is dead! She was found in her room this morning, lying on the floor, suffocated, it is believed, by inhaling the fumes of lighted charcoal. She took a pan of burning coal into her bedroom last night, it being somewhat chilly, and thus was accidentally smothered. Here, senor, is a letter, with your name on it, which was found in one of her hands."

I eagerly caught at the missive and tore it open, and, while great drops of sweat beaded my wildly-throbbing brow, read these words:—

"MY FRIEND,—I said last evening that you would see or hear from me to-day. I have pondered much since you opened your heart to me, and have even sought to be relieved of my vow; but he has been with me, and has said, 'Come! come higher—to me!' I am compelled to obey the summons, and oh, George, you will pity and forgive me, will you not? Pray for my soul, and love me even beyond the grave. In a package which will be found in my escritoire you will find a paper, duly drawn up and signed—a copy of which is in my legal adviser's hands for entry in the public records—in which I have bequeathed the bulk of my fortune to you. God have mercy upon me, a sinner! And oh, my love! forget not, in the years to come, that there was one, a poor, weak girl—who laid down her life because she loved you—who, by a solemn promise to a dying man, selfish even in his death hour, was prevented from proclaiming that love to the world. God protect you, is the prayer of your dead

ISABELLA."

Strange as it may seem, no one of Isabella's family disputed her right to dispose of her property in the way she did. With a deep and abiding sorrow for my lost love, I entered upon my inheritance. I was not to enjoy it in tranquillity, however. I subsequently lost by a revolution very much of it. The remainder, shortly anterior to the entrance of Maximilian into the city of Mexico, I disposed of to an Imperialist, and returned to London, where I pass my days in recalling to my imagination the face and form of the beautiful Isabella, whom I had so strangely met at the cathedral door, and whose love was mine from the first; but who was separated from me by a moral chasm which no soul could bridge—no hope leap.

## THE CHILDREN'S HOUR.

We are coming! Willies, Lucys, Anns and Lizzies, two and two; Frank and Robert, little gooses, We can find no mate for you.

We are coming! O believe us, Happy, joyful, glad, hurrah! In your open arms receive us With your blessing, Grandpapa!

## HELEN'S FORTUNES.

HELEN RAY came to a conclusion one morning—a memorable conclusion—which stamped the day on which it was made with the distinctness of lightning in a midnight sky. She was no giddy girl to decide hastily and then hang back from the consequences. She was a woman, though inexperienced, yet gifted with a slow, faithful persistence which always worked out the ends at which it was aimed.

Her mother was dead—long dead—in fact, so long as to be almost out of Helen's remembrance; but she had a father and six brothers, all older than she, and she was twenty-three; and with this father and brothers Helen's thoughts dealt that bright spring morning, as she stood before the glass brushing her yellow hair.

Helen made up her mind that no law of God or man required her to live longer in the same house with these men; and, therefore, that she would leave it as speedily as possible—and, leaving no trace after her, would go out into the world and make her own fortune.

What special part of villainy it was that drove her to this point, there is no need of saying. It is a good rule always to speak highly of the dead, whose lips are dumb to all human accusation; the dead have no faults, and Helen's father and brothers have expiated theirs long ago. So, standing before the glass, she soliloquised:—

"Why shouldn't I be able to make my way in the world alone? I am no beauty to be kidnapped, no heiress to be beset by fortune-hunters. I have a tolerable education, a matter-of-fact nature, and a courageous heart. I am old; the nonsense has been pretty well shaken out of me; there is not a vestige of romance in my soul. Why may I not go out into the world and succeed?"

Helen looked at her thoughtful face for a moment, as it confronted her in the glass; then, as she drove the last pin into the yellow curls at the back of her head, she said:—

"I can and I will!"

Helen went about her work in a perfectly collected manner; not a solitary pang pierced her heart as she sat down to the dinner-table with the seven, though she well knew that at the supper she would be missing, and that the whole seven would scour the country after her before evening. She ate her dinner, cool and as still as ever; then, going to her room, donned a respectable dress, hat, and shawl, put on her gloves, and leaving the rest of her wardrobe to "remember her by," as she said to herself, she walked out of the front door.

Her father was sitting on the porch as she passed out, but she never once looked at him, and from that you may know that she had passed weary years and drank bitter cups in that house. Well, she had, and she felt free as a bird to think she was escaping it forever!

She bought her ticket with her veil down, got into the train, and was hurried off.

Heroic Helen! She did not once turn her head to see the fading spires upon which she might never set her eyes again.

She travelled all night, and at early daybreak found herself in the great metropolis, hungry, tired, and haggard, with only the clothes she had on her person and five pounds in her pocket, and her freedom.

She had no luggage to cumber her, and she walked quietly along, avoiding the crowded thoroughfares, and turning into a pretty shaded street, she stopped mechanically before a modest-looking house, in the window of which was a bill bearing the inscription, "Board and Lodging."

Helen stopped here, and rung the bell, bringing the proprietress to the door. The good lady may have been waked up in her morning nap, for she proved cross and impertinent, and insisted on references.

"And where's your trunk?" she said.

"I left hastily, and could not stop to get my clothes together," replied poor Helen.

"Most folks is always leaving hastily," said the woman. "I'm never in haste. But if you were going to stay a great while, and would pay a month's board in advance, I'd overlook the references."

Helen asked what the month's board would be?

"Oh, a matter of six pounds or so."

Helen shook her head and turned away.

"I have only five in the world," said she.

"My soul and body!" ejaculated the astonished landlady. "And what did you mean to do?"

"Work!" repeated Helen, laconically.

"May be," said the landlady. "You're of the sort that's too proud for some kinds of work. You never washed dishes or swept a bedroom?"

"Oh, yes," said Helen.

"Most folks wouldn't take you without references, but if you want to work for me I'll take you for a month. You'll have food and lodging, and that's something here I tell you—and you may find something better then. You sew, do you? No? Too bad! sewing is well paid sometimes; but come in and take off your things. Dear, dear, what'll you do for a dress? I'll see if I can get you an old one of mine."

So the setting of that day's sun found Ellen installed as kitchen girl in Mrs. Weedle's boarding-house.

And as she sank on her knees that night this was the prayer she made, half choked with sobs:—

"Oh, God! teach me to be thankful for the walls which shelter my helpless womanhood."

But after a while she was thankful. Mrs. Weedle, though coarse and rough at times, was in the main indulgent, and her boarders were chiefly City men, who never noticed Helen at all, as if their minds were too full of their own cares to give them time to puzzle over the phenomenon of a lady in Mrs. Weedle's kitchen. She tried to get pupils—she tried to obtain work at embroidery, and she soon applied for a post in a school. But she was always foiled by that one word "references," and embroidery was at starvation prices.

One day she was in a shop making some trifling purchase and thinking over her situation, and how she could better it, when she found herself listening to a conversation between two gentlemen half way down the shop.

"So you are off to-morrow, Hartley?"

"Yes, Fred; off to-morrow. I begin to feel a little sad too, as I go about taking silent farewells of all the old places. I left Eva in tears this morning, and Skiff finds it hard to keep up. We have been like brothers, you know. Nothing in the world could tempt me to leave them but the certain conviction that in going I serve God best. You know I used to talk of such a life years ago."

"Yes, Hartley, you were always enthusiastic about teaching the heathen."

The speakers passed by Helen Ray, and looking up into the face of the younger man she thought it was the grandest face she had ever seen. They passed out of sight, but Helen had her cue. Her face brightened, the lines of trouble were smoothed off it, still youthful and sweet in its outlines.

"I can teach the heathen, too. If they ask for references I'll write to the clergyman of my parish. When I tell him why I write he'll be sure to give me the best recommendations."

Helen went home, put on her best clothes, and went out again direct to the secretary's office. There she found, not the secretary, but the young man she had seen in the shop, and questioned by him she told him that she was without ties of any kind and wished to go out as a teacher.

"Because you are without ties of any kind you wish to go?" he questioned, gravely.

Helen walked up and down the office before replying. By-and-bye, catching his dark eyes following her silently, she said:—



"I wish to go. I will be faithful to my vocation. I will never regret it, or, regretting it, will never show it, and I think," she added, with a flash, "I know enough to teach the heathen."

In spite of himself the young clergyman smiled.

"I will submit your case to Mr. — when he returns. You can send for your references, and you can go under certain conditions which he will explain to you."

He looked at her a little sharply to see if she understood him, but she did not do so, so he bowed her out, and she went home to write her letter.

But alas for Helen's calculations! When her recommendations arrived, and she presented them to the secretary, she was informed by that functionary that she could go with a party then fitting out on condition that she married one of the young missionaries.

"Marry a man I never saw!" said Helen, slowly, with her face crimson to her hair. "Never, sir! Never will I marry in that way. If that is the only way I can go I prefer to remain. If I serve God it will not be in bondage."

And Helen walked out sorrowfully with her crushed hopes, and went back to her kitchenwork.

One of Mrs. Weedle's boarders left a paper on the table, and Helen found it there when she came downstairs in the morning; and idly running her eyes over the paper, dropped them on this advertisement:—

**WANTED**—A reporter for the office of the *Wonder*.—Apply to A. L. Skiff, at the office.

Helen turned this over in her mind. "A reporter," she thought, "has to run about a good deal, and be out at all hours of the day and night. I couldn't do that. But I can go to the office of the *Wonder*, and perhaps I can get work of some kind."

And the next day she found Mr. Skiff in his office. He handed her to a chair politely, and then, with his kind grey eyes fixed on Helen's uneasy face, he waited for her to begin.

"If you please, sir, I called to see if you had any work that I could do?"

Of course he was astonished. Men always are when a woman tries to do anything out of the ordinary woman's routine; but he did not let his astonishment embarrass her; he got over it quickly, and putting on a business-like air, he questioned her pretty sharply.

"We do want a reporter," he said; "but I would be willing to do the reporting myself—it's utterly impossible for you, but I would do it myself if I could only find some one who could do a little sub-editing. I presume you would work cheaper than a man? Read that, if you please."

He handed Helen a sheet of thin paper, scribbled over with a lead pencil. Helen read it quite easily; and seeing that, he gave her a column cut from another paper, and asked her to put it into six lines, if she could. It proved to be a criticism of a book which Helen had read, and the task was easy enough.

Mr. Skiff was pleased. He offered Helen five-and-twenty shillings a-week for the first month, her duties to begin immediately, if possible.

So Helen went back to Mrs. Weedle's, and told that lady the good news; and, to do her justice, she rejoiced, though she was losing the best girl that ever stepped on her floor. Thus Helen left her old sphere; and Mrs. Weedle, relating her good fortune to the boarders at noon, was surprised at the many ejaculations of discontent drawn from them by the charming prospect of some red-haired, slipshod Nora in the kitchen leaving them to become a sub-editor; and so Helen Ray vanished, and in time was forgotten.

Was she happy in her new sphere? Yes, very happy—very contented and cheerful. Her dark days seemed all over—for she had dark days, and darker nights, though she had always shown her little world such a calm outside. She had her agonies—her bitter, bitter cups, which she had not even asked her Father to take away. Her life had gone on in that unquestioning submission peculiar to women like her; and, isolated as she was in the great city, she had her freedom, and that priceless blessing was cheaply bought by all her sufferings.

Mr. Skiff insisted on taking her to his house to board, and she was presented to his wife, who smiled on her kindly, with eyes very, very like the young clergyman's who had questioned her in the secretary's office, and straightway Helen was at home.

In the office she had a little corner partitioned off for herself, and here she sat all day and arranged the disorderly accounts of fires, murders and robberies brought in by Mr. Skiff. Here she reviewed books, and wrote political articles, and by-and-by, as her command over her pen grew greater, she wrote sketches, and had them accepted by prominent papers, and so found herself well established in the world of letters.

At home she heard of "Walter," who was connected with a particular mission. He was Mrs. Skiff's brother, as she had already guessed, and listening every evening to his praises from his sister's lips, Helen wondered at the fate or chance which had brought her in contact with him, and then with his relations.

"And do you know, Miss Ray," said Mrs. Skiff, as they sat alone one evening, the children being asleep and Mr. Skiff away at a political meeting, "Walter told me the night before he went that he had such an amusing adventure in the office that afternoon. He said a lady came in and tendered her services as teacher to the Board, and she seemed so perfectly straightforward and innocent when he hinted at the condition on which ladies were allowed to go. She did not know what he meant. I do believe he fell in love with her, for he said something about her face, with 'so much character and earnestness in it,' and said, too, that if it were not a perfectly atrocious custom, this tying people together who know nothing about each other, he would have asked her to go with him, but he didn't quite dare. Walter is an oddity, you see—quite an amusing fellow in his way, but a thoroughly good man. I wish you knew him."

And Helen's face never varied one particle as she listened to this description of her Quixotic attempt.

The days slipped quietly into months, and Helen's life ran on smoothly. In her heart there may have been a little corner of discontent, remembering, as she must, what might have been had her good fortune only come to her a little earlier; but as she had never seen that much-thumbed book of Fate, how was she to know that her good fortune came to her only because Walter Hartley was gone and she was now doing part of what was once his work?

She was not much to be censured for thinking of him. Was she not in the room which was once his? Was not his handwriting on the margin of every book therein? His photograph hung in the parlour over the piano, and every night as Helen played the children's hymns her eyes went in spite of her from the keys to the dark, handsome face, with its straight features and tender mouth, and in thought she followed him across the dark waters, and wondered what suns were shining upon him now.

By-and-by a cruel blow struck across the hearts of his friends—the ship in which he sailed was lost! A common tale, it is true; an every-day incident in the life of those whom stern necessity compels to "go down to the sea in ships." But for all that, it was keen and cruel. Oh, how keen—how cruel!

Again Helen stood before that noble face, and her self-command was gone. She would have rejoiced in the tidings of his safety and success; she would have gloried in the noble works he would perform; she would have held his life before her as a bright example to be humbly followed and imitated, and she knew that she would be better, truer, and nobler for it.

Oh, was he gone? He—so good, so true, so well-beloved—had the angry waters dared to rob the little world who needed him so much?

Call it rhapsody—this outburst of grief for the untimely fate of a man whom she had seen but twice. Was it wrong? No; for though she had only seen him twice, she knew she had seen her master—the one whom she needed above all others; one in whose strength she could trust, and whose goodness was above all price. So she dropped her head upon the piano, and let those wild sobs have full egress, and between them she cried out so pitifully—

"Walter—oh, Walter!"

"I am here, Helen. Tell me—are these tears for me?"

Was she dreaming? She started up, white as marble, her eyes wide open and purple with fright; and there, in the parlour door, with his sister crying and laughing by turns on his shoulder, stood Walter Hartley.

"Try and see if I am not flesh and blood, Helen," he said, coming forward and holding out his hand.

She took it mechanically, blushed scarlet as she felt his eyes reading her face, and turned pale again as he carried her hand to his lips; seeing which, Mrs. Skiff retreated and left Helen alone with her "master."

Well, Helen's fortunes worked themselves out bravely, and she went out to teach the heathen, after all; for Walter went in the next ship that sailed, and Helen with him.

It so happened that he was picked up by the very ship which brought the news of the wreck; so the bad news was followed closely enough by the good, and the wreck brought a blessing to the lonely woman, for which she had never hoped.

Was she not blessed? Had she not found the best of compensations in the noble life of which she was henceforth to be a part, and the true, faithful heart which had given her shelter from all storms forever more?

Take courage, sinking hearts! Be up and doing, and have faith that fortune awaits you, if you seek it out.

#### WILLOW AND BILLOW.

I SAW the Willow bending,  
In the tide of waters swift;  
Hither, thither, loosely tending,  
With the current's devious drift.  
And I said unto my soul:  
"Thou art the Willow!  
And in vain thou wouldst control  
Life's billow!"

And saying thus, and straying  
Near the river, day by day,  
Oft I saw the Willow awaying  
In the current's rapid play;  
And I pondered as I walked,  
"I am the Willow;  
Ever baffled—ever balked—  
By the billow!"

But the Willow, loosely tossing,  
Bending here and bowing there,  
While it yielded to the crossing,  
Always upward seemed to bear.  
So I said unto my soul:  
"Be like the Willow;  
Keep your head above the roll  
Of the billow!"

Under tempest—under freshest—  
Thus the Willow bent and bore,  
When the drift appeared to mesh it,  
Or when surges swept it o'er.  
And I said, within my heart:  
"This feeble Willow,  
Without compass, without chart,  
Rides the billow!"

But I wondered more, and pondered,  
When I saw the Willow lift  
Lofty head and waters sundered,  
Lofty breast above the drift.  
And I marvelled, as I said—  
"This daring Willow  
Rooted in the river's bed,  
Fights the billow!"

Well, indeed, without a quiver,  
Might the Willow now contend,  
And withstand the rolling river,  
And the current's rapid bend,  
For I saw, in wonder mute,  
This fragile Willow,  
Had an island at its root,  
Beneath the billow.

Floating leaves and branches withered,  
Loosened grass and drifted weeds  
Round about the Willow tethered,  
Gathered soil and gathered seeds  
Spreading out, as from a germ,  
Around the Willow—  
Till an island, large and firm,  
Barred the billow!

Never more the Willow, bending,  
Struggled in the waters swift—  
Never more, so loosely tending,  
Yielded to the devious drift.  
And I said unto my soul:  
"Be thou the Willow!  
Wait! and thou shalt yet control  
Life's billow!"

#### THE MUSIC OF WINTER WOODS.

MAJESTIC WOODS! though bare ye wave,  
Though all your crowns are lost,  
And round ye, like tortured souls,  
The writhing clowns are lost.  
Yet, still, ye have a minstrelsy,  
And still ye lift the heart  
With feelings beautiful and grand,  
Beyond the touch of art.

What lessons in your leafless boughs!  
Though bare they rustle still  
With all the stern, un pitying storms,  
Nor sink beneath the ill.  
So, when misfortune strikes the soul,  
If truth and courage reign,  
It nobly takes each iron blow,  
Nor sinks beneath the pain.

Yes, winter woods! 'tis yours to roll  
Grand music for us still,  
If a true love of Nature makes  
An altar of the will.

#### THE AVENGING HEAD.

THE light of the setting sun lay like a red path upon the sea. Below and aloft the ship caught the ruddy gleam; a halo of glory seemed to encircle the brow of the angel which, with outstretched wings, was the figure head sculptured upon the bows. In fact, the name of the vessel was the *Seraph*; an appellation which had been chosen by her superstitious owner—an old sailor—for the sake of good luck.

There was nothing of the seraph about her captain. He was a short, stout, bandy-legged man, with his eyes bulging, and as hard as marbles. His hands were as rough as potatoes, and double joints instead of wings, were in his strong but deformed shoulders. His disposition was also non-seraphic. Marlinspikes, handspikes, blocks of wood, anything, in fact, upon which he could lay his hands, were freely used as missiles when he was angry.

At the time spoken of he was walking the quarter deck with rapid strides. Having just risen from his afternoon nap, his hair stood out like inverted crinoline, and his eyes were bloodshot. He glanced at the canvas several times, when, seeing nothing to find fault with, he stepped into the waist and stood watching the men forward. All were busy weaving curious knots, or sewing their dilapidated shirts and pantaloons. Tom Chunk, a little, old, weazen-faced tar, with a bald spot as white as an egg on the top of his head, sat cross-legged upon the knighthead, mending the tin pan in which he was wont to receive his rations. He hummed and whistled a tune while he worked, and as the captain disliked whistling, he concluded that he would put a stop to it. His manner of doing so was characteristic. He picked up an iron marlinspike, took good aim, and hurled the instrument at the bald spot on the old tar's head, just as the sailor bent over to look at the bottom of his pan. Whiz-buz-z-z-z went the iron tool, just missing its destination, and dropping into the sea.

"Back the main-yard!" roared the skipper, with an oath.

This was done, when seizing old Tom by the throat the captain shook him violently.

"Down you go, you infernal rascal!" he cried, "down you go into the sea, and bring me back that marlinspike!"

"I didn't throw it overboard," plaintively squealed poor Tom.

"You didn't, eh! well it was your fault any way; I throwed it at your head, and your cursed head escaped it. Come, bring me up that marlinspike, or it'll be the worse for ye!"

"I ain't much of a swimmer," replied Tom. "I could never find the marlinspike if I should try."

The captain, however, was not to be turned from his purpose; as Tom, who was of a meek disposition, and, who besides, knew that if he resisted he would be tied up and flogged, stripped himself to the waist and dived from the stern of the ship as he was ordered to do.

Soon he rose to the surface, puffing and blowing like a porpoise. "Have you got it?" inquired the captain.

"No."

"Well, down you go again, then."

The sailor dived a second time without success. When he came up he gasped for breath, and struck out for the rope dangling from the stern.

"Not yet!" cried the captain. "Another dive."

"I can't do it," replied Tom.

"You must, or I'll brace forward and leave you."

So down went the poor fellow again.

The captain watched vainly for his re-appearance. An ominous murmur circulated amongst the men.

"He'll never come up again! It was too much for him, that third dive!" said the mate.

He was right, minutes glided into hours, and still nothing was seen of the unfortunate sailor.

"Brace forward!" cried the captain, in a quick sharp voice—the voice of an uneasy conscience.

His men solemnly obeyed, and the *Seraph* continued in her course. When the captain came on deck the next morning, he looked wild and baggard.

His face showed that he had not slept; great blue rings, like tattoo marks, encircled his eyes.

He advanced to the rail, and, leaning over it moodily, glanced down at the water. Then he uttered a cry of dismay, and drew back, shuddering.

"What is it?" inquired the mate.

"There, in the water, alongside—the top of his head!" exclaimed the captain.

The mate with several of his men peered into the sea.

"Ay, ay, there it is!" gasped the first officer—"right alongside, the top of poor Tom's head—the bald spot protruding out of the water! God help the ship and her crew!"

The men were horrified; especially when they perceived that the bald spot seemed to follow the ship!

One sailor, bolder than the rest, clambered into the chains, and endeavoured to touch the head with a boat-hook, when it suddenly vanished.

"That's mighty strange!" cried the man, shuddering; and you could not have hired him for a million to use the boat-hook in the same way again, when the head re-appeared a few minutes later.

Now the captain trembled from head to foot.

He rushed into the cabin, and drank brandy until he could scarcely stand. Then he staggered on deck, and again peered over the rail.

The head was still there, but the skipper now watched it undis-  
mayed.

Bending too far over the bulwark, down he went, with a hoarse shriek into the sea. As he sank the head disappeared with him.

A boat was lowered, but the unfortunate man was never seen again.

Not so the head, which made itself visible soon after the return of the boat to the ship. While the men were watching it, it suddenly turned half over, disclosing a curious fin.

"We have all been deceived," said the mate. "This is a fish, called the moon-fish, as we can easily see now. Its head resembles the top of a bald skull!"

An iron was produced, and darted into the body of the fish, which was then hauled on deck.

"I thought from the first it wasn't poor Tom's head," said the man who used the boat-hook; "but when it disappeared so sudden like, d'y'ee see, it kind of frightened me into thinkin' 'as the rest of you did, especially as I'd never seen such a fish before."

#### TO A LOVED ONE AT SEA.

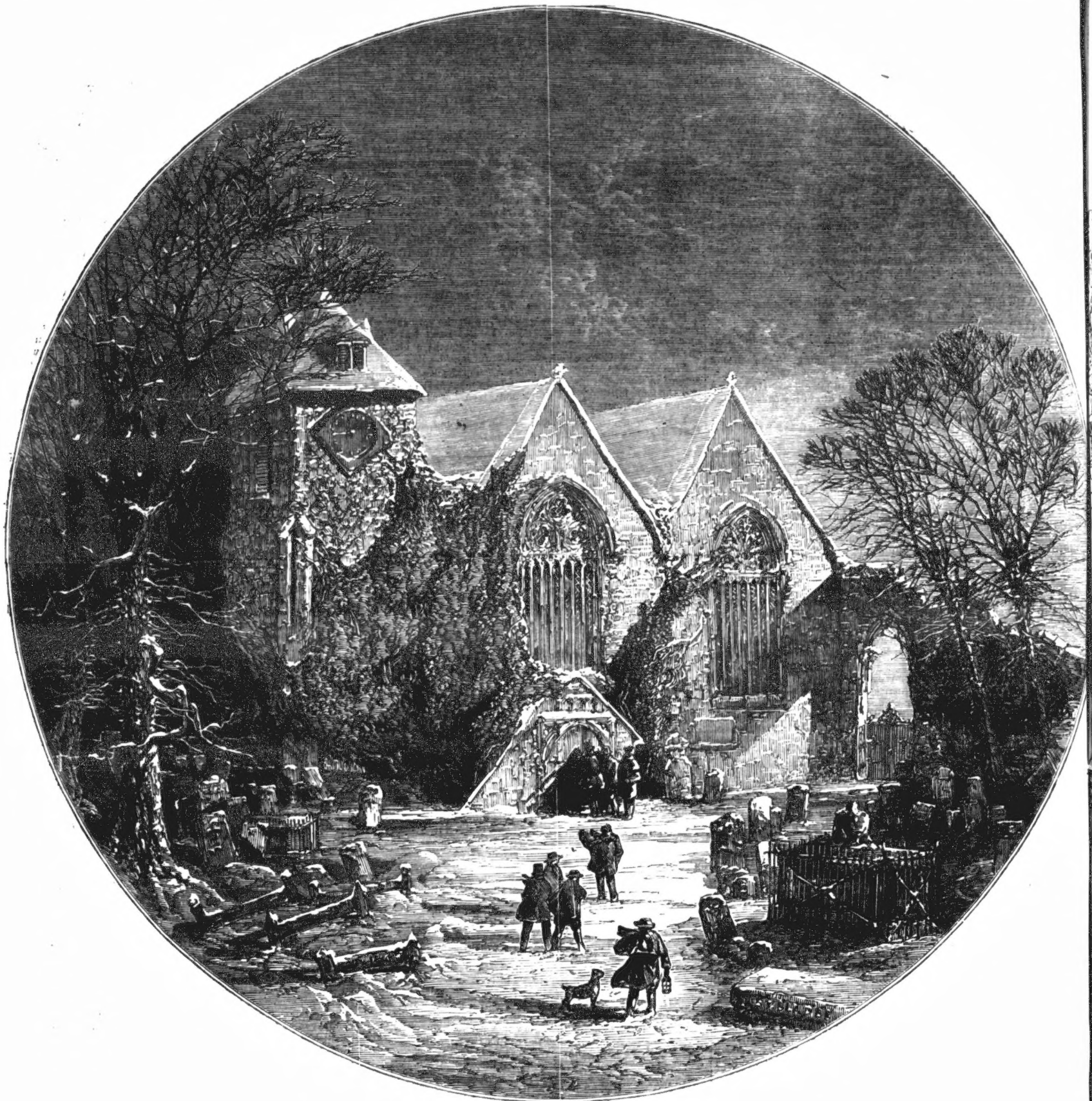
BACK to my heart, in form distinct and clear,  
Memory brings her as I beheld her last;  
Each word, each gentle look to me so dear,  
And everything that then between us passed.

The salt spray dashes round her lovely form,  
And now she feels it on her forehead laid;  
She hears the awful howling of the storm,  
That follows in the track where she has strayed.

And I have strayed beside the restless sea,  
To watch the billows round me idly play,  
Hoping that they might bring some news to me  
Of that dear loved one roaming far away.

Oh, sounding sea! thy restless waves roll high,  
And sing a song of sadness unto me  
Which brings to me the sad refrain, that I,  
Alas! have a loved one the deep blue sea!





CHRISTMAS MORNING.

## The Poisoner's Daughter: A TALE OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

CHAPTER XXIII.—(CONTINUED.)  
THE JEW AND THE ALCHEMIST.

"ALL shall be done, doctor," said the pawnbroker, whose air from the moment that the alchemist had entered had been that of a man in mortal terror.

"If there is the slightest failure in any one single item, Master Ben Isaacs," whispered the alchemist, "all London shall learn why David Cohen, the late partner of Ben Isaacs, was found dead—"

"No more! no more, doctor!" said the pawnbroker, shuddering. "Some one might hear you. Gotts in Heaven—dats is all over now—shay not a wort mores—not a wort mores, goot Doctor Pramé. Ben Isaacs will go vid himself. I vill rides de trip. But who pays for all dem horses, and all dat?"

"The men who dropped poison in the coffee of David Cohen!" replied the alchemist, with a grim smile.

The Jew plucked his shaggy beard, and beat himself on the head, saying—

"I vash a fool not to know that. Ah, what did Ish does him for? I gits not so moosh—"

"Only all he had, Ben. Some five thousand pounds or more."

"Hush, goot man, not so louds! That men in the oder rooms hears you, berhaps. Sh! I'll pay for dem horses. Ish your frent, doctor. I make no monish moosh now time, but I vill pay for dem horses."

"And shall I pay Master Oliphant for his boat and crew?" Ben Isaacs groaned, but the eyes of the alchemist held him as the fangs of a spider holds a miserable fly.

"Shay no more worts of dat, goot doctor. I pay him, and den we is all square, doctor."

"Until I need you again. You are my friend, you know, and therichly embroidered, costly gloved, Ben Isaacs!" "Oh, tam te gloves, and te world!" cried the unhappy Jew, as he thought of what this visit of the alchemist would cost him. "I make you presents of dem gloves, doctor. You see dat Ben Isaacs ish shenerous, eh? Tam te gloves!"

"Thank you, Ben; and the heavy, richly-chased silver salver?" asked the alchemist, who enjoyed the writhings of his victim.

"Oh, Cotts forgive me! I forgote de big shilver plate, worths ten pound's cash! You pay for dat, eh?—goot, kind man."

The alchemist looked at him steadily, but made no reply. But what was said by that look made the Jew feel icy cold.

"Take the plate, too! take dat too, my frent! he cried. "Mine Cotts in Himmel! Holy Moses! Father Abraham! I ish ruined, by tam! I shall go begs mit de street, mit mine hat in mine hands, so like as dis, and shall say, 'Oh, mine coot peoples! giff Ben Isaacs one benny for the loves of Coot!' like as dem beggars on London Bridge."

"I am sorry to hear that this expense, a few hundred pounds, will ruin you," remarked the alchemist, in a pitying tone. "You know when I furnished you with the poison—"

"Bo! bo! Not so louds. Speak soft so like as my cat's whisper," cried the Jew, in great terror.

"I refused any pay, then, and told you that after David Cohen was buried—"

"Bo! bo! Not so louds."

"I would ask for pay," continued the alchemist. "So I have asked this of you, who gained five thousand pounds or more."

"Shay dat easy, goot doctor?"

"And am sorry that you say you are ruined, for I need money."

"Holy Jacob! he wants monish!" exclaimed the terrified Jew.

"Yes; I always claim a third of what is made by such little pleasant affairs."

"A third!"

"And as you made, say six thousand pounds, Master Isaacs, I must have just two thousand."

The wretched Jew made no reply to this. He could do nothing but stare and breathe in great puffs.

"I will call for it at any time I need it," continued the inexorable poisoner, who never suffered his employers to escape easily. "So have it ready at every moment. Two thousand in gold or diamonds. I prefer diamonds."

"He brefsers ti diamonds!" groaned Ben Isaacs, staring at his torturer. "Mine Cotts! vot a price for a little something not so moosh as a pinch of shnuff!"

"Well, give me that 'little something' back," said the alchemist.

"Giff it back when David Cohen has drank him?" stammered the Jew.

"Listen, Ben; that 'little something' which he drank in the coffee you gave him is in his stomach now, as he lies in his grave, where that 'little something' sent him one hour after he swallowed it, and if he should be dug up the doctors would find it there—yes, though he had been buried five years instead of one, Ben, for that 'little something' was arsenic, and will last many years, a very good witness against you."

"And, you, too!" cried Ben, made desperate for a moment.

"Bah! Can you prove that I gave it to you. No. But I can prove that you gave it to David Cohen. So, instead of two thousand, make it three thousand, and have it ready within three hours."

With these words the alchemist turned from him, after darting straight into his staring eyes a terrible glance of angry warning. Ben Isaacs, lived with terror, fell forward upon his counter, too weak to stand erect, and muttering—

"Three thousand pounds! Mine Cott! Three thousand pounds! Father Moses! Three thousand pounds! Holy city!"

The alchemist then entered the room in which the three men were awaiting the return of their comrade and the corporal, and despatched them with orders to find tidings of the inmates of the destroyed house of Freeman's marsh.

(Continued on page 12.)





CHRISTMAS IN ENGLAND.



## THE OLD MAID'S DEFEAT.

"It is just like Henry!"

"So like him!"

The first speaker was an invalid lady, seated in a wheel-chair before the open window, through which the fragrance of flowers floated on the still air, her rigid, cold hands folded primly upon her lap, her pale features surrounded by a stony frill of cap, and her gaunt figure robed in sombre folds of black. A grim, stern woman, who had for years been cramped into that wheeled chair, who had known little from that time of the outer world of sunshine, but had silently nursed her sorrow and brooded over it, although, to all appearance, outwardly contented.

Her companion was a small, active person of uncertain age, sharp featured, quick-eyed and plain, but for a natty toilet, and the lustre of her smooth black hair. Miss Maria Lorrent lived by her wits, properly speaking. She had a tiny income, and a tiny establishment somewhere in the suburbs of London, whither she retired at certain intervals to indulge in a private cup of tea, and a few old finery into new with her clever fingers, and thus be in readiness when her kind friends should send for her to come for a week or a month, as the case might be.

Of all the numerous families she favoured with her presence there was none in which she strove to please so much as that of the invalid, Mrs. Stead. Miss Lorrent did not cherish a strong affection for her hostess, but I am afraid she did for her unmarried brother, Mr. Henry Grattan. There were many nice little schemes plotted over in her periods of retirement to the tiny establishment before mentioned, and the principal one, the centre around which all else revolved as of minor significance, was the hope of eventually becoming Mrs. Henry Grattan.

"I hope she may be ugly and stupid," was Mrs. Stead's next remark, delivered in the same metallic, passionless voice that answered the doctor's questions, and held arguments with the clergyman.

"It can make no difference," replied Miss Lorrent, nervously, wincing and reddening.

"Can it not?" said Mrs. Stead, a grim smile curling her lips.

"You forget the weak nature of mankind."

Then there was silence between them, for Miss Lorrent forgot herself—everything, save that her dearest project in life was in peril. Turn we now to the object of this natural anxiety.

Mr. Grattan, the happy possessor of a large fortune, was a refined gentleman, somewhat of a male flirt, and a thorough man of the world, so small wonder that his widowed sister was more petted and caressed by marriageable ladies than often falls to the share of invalids. He had some time before the commencement of this story received tidings from a poor Italian musician, whom he had befriended, imploring aid for his only child who would soon be left alone in the world. When the father died, Mr. Grattan, true to the impulse of doing as he pleased, which had governed his life heretofore, took measures to bring the orphan under his own roof.

"She will make a nice companion for you, Margaret," he had said to his sister, and Mrs. Stead reluctantly yielded, because there was no alternative. Accordingly he had gone for the girl, and that very evening they were expected.

Soon the grind of carriage wheels on the winding sweep of the avenue caught the ears of the two listeners; there was a moment's pause at the entrance door, and then Mr. Grattan entered his sister's presence with his companion. The gaze of the two women fastened eagerly upon her; then Miss Lorrent darted an anxious, sidelong glance at Mr. Grattan.

The girl was small and slender, her eyes of the deepest blue—almost black in the shade—her features delicate, and her hair—who can describe Fay's hair? It was a mingling of red and brown, brown and red, and powdered with glints of gold dust that rolled in crisp waves about her head like a beautiful crown. In her simple dress, with this luxuriance of hair rippling out from beneath the plain crêpe bonnet, she was lovely beyond description, and these two women, seeing her beauty, hated her—the one with a jealous pang of rage—the other with a sudden thrill of fear.

"What is your name, my dear?" said Mrs. Stead, calmly.

"Sibilla Luigi; mamma always called me Fay."

I think she must have read their thoughts, although the only sign she gave was a slight compression of the lips, and an upward glance at her benefactor, which said, "They will never like me, you perceive."

If Mr. Grattan did notice the cold reception, he blinded himself to the probable importance of it, for he liked the pretty, graceful child of Signor Luigi quite enough to want to shelter her by his immediate influence.

The great house was all ablaze with splendour from basement to roof. There were lights everywhere, shining upon heaped-up draperies in the dressing-rooms; flashing over diamonds and emeralds; tinting velvet and satin in the parlours; shrouded among the delicate ferns and drooping blossoms of the conservatories, and twinkling like jewels framed in darkness on the trees of the ground.

It was a very grand party indeed. So thought the guests, and, as a result, Mrs. Muzzletop, the hostess.

Miss Lorrent was there in all the glory of a purple moire antique, with point lace collar, and looked more elegant by far than her next neighbour, who was loaded with finery to suffocation. What matter if the purple moire had been given to her? A mere tumbled bundle. Were there not certain wonderful little boyles in her secret cupboard that caused it to rustle once more? What if her point lace was the bequest of a dead friend to whose foibles she had patiently submitted, and now the lace was her reward.

Mr. Grattan was there with a pretty compliment for everybody, the dear, delightful man. And Mr. Grattan's protégé was there, feeling strange and timid in the throng, and glad to shrink out of the way into a corner. This arrangement suited Miss Lorrent very well, so long as it enabled her to keep Mr. Grattan for her cavalier.

"There is Tom; do make her go to Fay. She would rather see him than any one else, I am sure," said the lady, sweetly. "Tom," she added, as that young gentleman strolled near, "Do you see Fay moping in the corner?"

For answer he turned, and made his way with alacrity towards the object of his search. Miss Lorrent smiled, and looked askance at her companion, who frowned slightly.

"Miss Fay, will you dance?"

"Thanks, but I would rather not."

"Oh, yes, do come. This *deux temp* is perfectly delicious," and Mr. Tom Grattan gave her what he was pleased to consider a "telling" glance, which certainly had the desired effect, since Mr. Grattan soon after saw them skimming away over the smooth floor like birds.

"You are graceful as a fawn, and beautiful as an angel," whispered Tom Grattan as he led her to a seat.

Fay pouted, for she liked neither Mr. Tom Grattan nor his compliments.

Soon after Mrs. Muzzletop swooped down upon the girl and bore her to the music room, where she was placed at the piano, a group of strange faces crowding about her, and Miss Lorrent standing beside her, which did not tend to re-assure her.

"I hope you will not break down," whispered the lady, as she bent over to arrange a flower in Fay's hair, "it would be such a mortification to Mr. Grattan if you did."

With this encouragement the poor, sensitive young creature began, her fingers trembling, her throat dry, her heart fluttering with the dread of failure. There was a sickening silence of expectation, a longing to flee through the close ranks of the people into

the outer night, and bury herself anywhere from sight, then a few faint, tuneless notes hovered on the air, and died tremulously into the stillness again. A distant murmur arose, the guests shrugged their shoulders, and looked at each other. Mrs. Muzzletop felt indignant. She expected no failures that night, and Miss Lorrent's features wreathed themselves into a smile, do what she would to prevent it, as she advised Fay "to give it up." But Fay only looked away to where a kindly smile of encouragement, a half gesture of command, awaited her. Then, suddenly, without warning, the pure, rich Italian voice found utterance, and rose in wave upon wave of heavenly sound, and floated in silvery harmony above and about the listeners, only to die away again in rippling chimes of melody.

Fay did not wait to enjoy her triumph, for when they all pressed forward to compliment the charming songstress she had vanished.

In the fragrance and shadow of the conservatory Fay crouched, her face brushed by a cluster of snowy orange blossoms, as the branch swept above her head, her brain in a whirl. She felt very wretched. She longed for the old quiet life she used to lead with her father. She thought of the times when he would return from his place in the orchestra at the opera, and discuss the success or failure of the evening; how Madame Farazzi had lost voice sadly; how the new tenor, Braek, was thin and sharp as unripened grapes; how little Nina was turning her head with vanity.

"Her hair was tawny with gold,  
Her eyes with purple were dark,  
Her cheeks pale opal burn  
With a red and restless spark."

So sang Tom Grattan as he parted the branches and discovered Fay's hiding-place.

"Oh, dear!" she exclaimed, impatiently. "I have heard enough of the lady of Milan."

She was not in the mood for a *tele-a-tete* conversation with her admirer, so she moved away resolutely. Tom was piqued by her indifference into following.

"It is time we understood each other, Mademoiselle Luigi," and he laid a detaining hand on her arm. "I have thought of nothing, dreamed of nothing but you since I came from college. I love you better a thousandfold than any woman I ever saw. Will you marry me?"

It was a very old story indeed, yet entirely new to Fay, and she stood quite still to listen, although she did not love this man.

"I can offer you other inducements than my love, if necessary," he went on hurriedly. "The standing of my family is good. I shall inherit my father's wealth and probably that of my Uncle Henry."

"Don't be too sure of that; there's many a slip, you know," said a voice behind them, and Mr. Grattan smiled upon his discomfited nephew.

Fay showed no compassion for the mortification of her suitor, but sweeping him a half grave, wholly saucy little curtsy, said:—

"I am much obliged to you for the honour you have done me to-night, Mr. Grattan. In some cases the inducements you offer of wealth and rank might influence me; as it is, however, I can frankly say that I do not return your affection."

"Perhaps you are already engaged," remarked Tom, growing very angry and spiteful at the state of affairs. "My uncle may have forestalled me."

Mr. Grattan laughed the most provoking laugh in the world, while poor Fay trembled with indignation.

"I have not proposed to the little lady in question, nor do I intend to ever do so; for I am afraid I should receive a more formal refusal than you have done, poor fellow! and that was dreadful enough. I must insist now on your going home, as it grows late, and you must not be a ghost to-morrow."

Fay pressed his arm gratefully, and soon after she was driving away rapidly from the scene of revelry, in company with Miss Lorrent.

The latter arose next morning oppressed by many painful thoughts. No sleep had visited her weary senses during the dark hours in which she had tortured herself with the probable insecurity of the hope cherished for many years. How had she striven to please Mr. Grattan, by studying his pleasures, by adapting her own tastes to his, sometimes at the expense of considerable labour, for Miss Lorrent was not an intellectual person, and all for this—to have a mere chit of a music-master's daughter step in before her because of a pretty face! It was hard, Miss Lorrent; of that there can be no doubt; yet it is only the natural order of things—the old must make way for the young.

It was unfortunate for Fay that Mrs. Stead could take a drive with her brother that morning, for there was a storm brooding for which she was unprepared. She was seated by the window idly gazing out, and arranging in her own mind how she should inform Mr. Grattan of her desire to go away, when the tempest broke.

"Miss Luigi," commenced Miss Lorrent, from her place by the table, "did it ever occur to you that you might fall in your chief aim after all?"

"Very often," returned Fay, quietly.

"Well then, since you are so frank, I can tell you that you will not succeed," continued the other, with a short dry laugh. "Women of greater beauty than you have tried it and failed—do you hear? miserably failed."

"I don't see that beauty has anything to do with it," said Fay.

Miss Lorrent's colour rose dusky in her cheek, her eyelids drooped after an ugly, catfish fashion; and her hands clenched spitefully together.

"You are bolder than I thought, to acknowledge all this, though I certainly gave you credit for employing any means to better your condition. For shame! If you do not take yourself off out of this house at once, I will tell Mr. Grattan you intend to marry him. Marry him—ha! ha! If he ever marries at all! We have for years been—" and Miss Lorrent finished the lie that her tongue refused to frame by slowly raising her finger, on which glistered a superb ring.

Fay looked mechanically at this emblem of plighted troth, and was not surprised at the announcement, although perhaps a little pained. The truth only dawned slowly upon her. She had supposed at first that Miss Lorrent divined that she wanted to go away; now it was clear what it all meant. Could Mrs. Stead think the same? Fay, then, did the very best thing to be done; or certainly the most ladylike; for she left the room without another word.

When she had done so, and Miss Lorrent's anger had cooled a trifle, the lady became seriously alarmed at the result of this outburst. What if Fay exposed the whole matter to Mr. Grattan? Should she not be overwhelmed with shame? She searched for the girl everywhere in the house and grounds, but could find no trace of her.

Later that day there appeared at one of the low windows of Mr. Grattan's library a troubled young face, surrounded by rippling hair, in which the wind had been playing the merriest pranks.

"If you please, may I come in, sir?"

"Certainly," replied Mr. Grattan, laying down his pen.

Fay sprang lightly across the ledge and stood before him, swinging her hat by one ribbon, in a childish attitude, her eyes downcast and her small foot tracing the carpet pattern half shyly, half impatiently. The sunlight followed her lovingly; the fragrance of clover and fresh-mown hay lingered about her, and infused insensibly a bright presence in that dark, stately room, where Mr. Grattan had dreamed away the best portion of his life.

He leaned back in his arm-chair, and looked at his visitor intently. Had he been an artist, he thought, he could have immortalized her on canvas; as a man, his gaze rested lingeringly, admiringly, upon the fair face.

"Mr. Grattan, I want to go away," said Fay, abruptly.

"Where do you wish to go, Fay?" he asked, in surprise.

"Anywhere."

"That is not complimentary to us at all. If you go away, who will sing to me?—who will be young and gay in this grim old house?"

He, at least, would miss her, then. In her gratitude for his kindness, Fay acted on the first impulse of her warm heart, in kneeling beside him and kissing his hand.

Mr. Grattan went on in the soft, low tone habitual to him when speaking to women.

"What wise plan has entered your pretty head now, my pet? Do you wish to be a great singer, and have the world stare at you through its lorgnette? No! Then perhaps you think it would do to be a wretched drudge of a governess, and waste your life on stupid children?"

"Don't laugh at me, please," implored Fay, her face hidden against the chair arm. "Tell me what is best."

"In my opinion the most rational thing to do is to stay here for another month at least. On the evening of the twenty-first of July, just four weeks from to-day, I will tell you a plan of mine. Will you trust it all to me?"

Fay counted the weeks on her fingers with a puzzled air, then shook her head doubtfully.

Mr. Grattan laid his hand caressingly upon her head, and bent over her with the truth hovering upon his very lips, I am afraid, but fortunately just then a low tap on the door, and the rustle of silken garments, announced the entrance of Miss Lorrent. Mrs. Stead wanted Fay to sing to some visitors, so she had come for her. Of course where should the artful mix be but beside Mr. Grattan's chair, in the prettiest of attitudes! Miss Lorrent may be well excused for setting her teeth together at the sight, in an unpleasant manner, suggestive of a spring trap.

The time went slowly by, and Fay waited for the eventful day to arrive when Mr. Grattan would show her the best course to adopt. It seems all very strange that she should have indulged in no vain dreams and conjectures as to whether it was possible that he had fallen in love with her, yet so it was. Firm in her faith in him, she believed when the time came, by his larger experience and his wisdom, he would direct her aright. Besides, was he not, in Fay's estimation, already engaged to Miss Lorrent, and in this matter the younger must needs indulge in a spice of feminine sarcasm—what could Mr. Grattan see to admire in the old maid?

During this all-important period of expectation Mr. Grattan was very kind to Fay; but at times he was moody and abstracted, which was quite a contrast to his usual manner. Miss Lorrent kept a keen surveillance over Fay's every movement that would have been unendurable but for the prospect of its ending soon. As for Mrs. Stead, although her secret anxiety might be equal to that of Miss Lorrent, she took more pains to conceal it.

The month wore away, and in the evening shadows of the July day sat Fay, bending over to catch the last ray of daylight upon the book from which she was reading aloud to Mrs. Stead. The air was heavy with a sultry heat, the leaves drooped motionless from the trees, and a towering mass of clouds rose slowly in fantastic, irregular forms from the west. Suddenly a flood of rosy light rent the heavens, followed by the thunder crash, and the storm began.

"Fay, do you expect to live here always?" questioned Mrs. Stead, suddenly.

"I hope not," was the naive reply.

"Ah!" commented Mrs. Stead, dryly. "I suppose you must know that it was only a whim of my brother's ever bringing you here at all, in which I had no authority, or you would not have come. What will you do when he gets tired of his benevolence?"

It was very hard, but Fay checked the hasty retort that rose to her lips, and remained silent.

The lightning flashed, the thunder pealed, and the rain drove in sheets of spray aslant on the parched earth. Mrs. Stead had retired to the adjoining bed-room for the night, her maid had withdrawn, and Fay was alone to watch and think, for Mr. Grattan and Miss Lorrent had gone to an evening party, not to return until a late hour. As the clock ticked the passing moments through the stillness a chill of disappointment crept over poor Fay. Mr. Grattan must have forgotten all about his promise. She battled with her thoughts valiantly for a time, but then the cold shadowy fear would become more real, until the tears flowed fast. She was startled by a light touch on her shoulder, and looking up she saw a dark figure looming about her. Fay's quick scream of astonishment was hushed by the heavy folds of a cloak, and she felt herself led away. The silence was broken by the covering being lifted from her in the dazzling glow of the library light, and Mr. Grattan stood smiling at her bewilderment.

"That is the most approved manner of carrying off a lady fair," he said, gaily.

"I thought you were at the party," faltered Fay, smiling faintly.

"You thought I had forgotten all about the 21st of July, also, when I assure you nothing else has occupied my mind this long time. Why, Fay, what is the matter?"

Yes, she had broken down utterly at last; she did not care for his advice now. The world, with its hard realities, was too much for Signor Luigi's little daughter. She threw herself down by the sofa, buried her face in the cushions, and sobbed without restraint.

Then, Mr. Grattan raised the slight form gently in the sheltering clasp of his arms, and, with the tearful young face pressed close to his, told her his plan in all its details.

And Fay listened wonderingly, until she forgot to sob, to the recital of how this distinguished gentleman loved her very tenderly, and had come to beg her to be his wife. He had never fancied the grand ladies about him, then, but chose her instead. Fay did not question the fact, however; she trusted it was all as he had said, and no painful fears that pity prompted him disturbed her happiness.

"But Miss Lorrent's ring?" she said, shrinking from him.

"What, now, little one? I have never given her a ring."

"Oh, she told—that is, I supposed," and Fay paused from very shame to expose another woman's falsehood.

The next morning there danced into the breakfast-room, before the astonished vision of Mrs. Stead and her friend, a breezy sunbeam of a creature, all fresh muslin, and bright smiles, with a brilliant diamond ring flaming and flashing upon one slender finger.

Mrs. Stead and her friend noting all these things, in a state of petrified amazement, were further astonished by the beaming tenderness on Mr. Grattan's handsome face, as he drew the fairy apparition to his side, and formally introduced her as his future wife.

Miss Lorrent did not faint, although the stony rigidity of her features would have warranted such a catastrophe. She only rose and left the room with all dignity; she did not trust herself to speak.

Time does not pause for mortal sorrows; and while there is happiness reigning in Mr. Grattan's household, in which Mrs. Stead is gradually taking her part, and occasionally Mr. and Mrs. Tom Grattan, a sharp little old woman is mistress of the tiny establishment, where, it is supposed, her maid of all work leads a hard life of it, and even the cat comes in for her share of nagging.

So goes this world of ours, Miss Lorrent!



## A NOBLE SACRIFICE.

THERE were two little, but by no means insignificant, bits of humanity among the cabin passengers of the Erato, bound from Liverpool to New York; two merry, rollicking, democratic young prattlers, about three years of age, whose real names were Tom Clyde and Harry Links, but who were better known among the sailors as "Iron-clad" and "Jolly-boat"—terms bestowed upon them by Jack Brand, a rough-looking sea-dog forward.

I don't think Jack's bump of comparison was very large; for Tom's only claim to the title of "Iron-clad" was his sturdy bearing, and there seemed no reason for calling Harry "Jolly-boat," except that he rolled and pitched like a block of wood in a chopping sea when he walked.

The children's mothers—one was a widow, while the other was accompanied by her husband—were both lovely women, and though strangers to each other, on first coming aboard ship, the fact of each having with her a boy of the same age was a bond of sympathy which soon made them friends, and, with the true maternal instinct, rivals—in a harmless way. Each, by the many little arts peculiar to her sex, would endeavour to make her darling look more pretty and bewitching than the other's; and luckily, thanks to love's glamour, such emulation never bred mischief between the young matrons, the one perceiving, at all times, something more attractive or wonderful in her offspring than in her companion's.

The little fellows themselves were perfectly unconscious as to their respective merits; while the handsome clothes, jewels, and other ornaments bedecking their persons were by them treated with cool indifference, if not with contempt.

Though Jolly-boat should make his appearance with a new silk hat, containing a bright feather, and with pink shoes on his feet, soon after Iron-clad's mother launched her pet out of the cabin in full Highland costume, yet neither Jolly-boat nor Iron-clad would show the slightest disposition to fight, but would either throw themselves upon the inclined deck and roll in rapid unison to leeward, or toddle forward to play with the Jack tars.

These men, one and all, loved the little fellows, and when at leisure would make boats for them out of chips of wood, tell them wonderful stories, dance hornpipes for them, and amuse them in many other ways.

Doubtless the children were most delighted with Jack Brand, who, with a youngster upon each shoulder, might have been seen trotting about the decks.

On one occasion he carried Iron-clad aloft on his back, as high as the foretop-gallant yard, greatly to the dismay of Mrs. Clyde, the widow, who happened to get sight of the "adventurers" just as they gained the topmast rigging.

The re-assuring voice of Brand, however, and his careful manner of holding the child, to say nothing of the pleasure evinced by the little rider, as with his bright flaxen curls waving in the wind and one rosy cheek pressed to the sailor's shaggy whiskers, he was borne higher and higher into the bracing air, soon quieted the mother's fears.

"Don't be alarmed, madam," said the captain, who stood on the poop, smoking his pipe; "the boy is safe enough with Brand in a physical point of view, though morally I—"

He suddenly checked himself, shrugging his shoulders and colouring, as if he thought he had said too much. He had roused a woman's curiosity, however, and so was obliged to proceed.

"Morally, this Jack, you see, having been in prison, is hardly a fit companion for a youngster, and—"

"Beg pardon, sir," interrupted the first officer; "but Brand, as I have heard, was afterwards proved not guilty, and was released."

"I think I have heard something to that effect, too," said the skipper; "but for all that I would not allow a child of mine to associate with a man who had mixed with criminals."

"Please tell that man to bring my boy back at once," cried the widow, turning pale.

The captain bowed, and springing into the waist ordered Brand to come down. He obeyed, and the moment his feet touched the deck Mrs. Clyde snatched her child from his arms, without a word, and hurried off with it.

Jack seemed almost stupefied, until the captain explained, when the poor fellow shook his head sadly, and walking to the windlass, sat down as if all the strength had left his great, strong body.

After that the two mothers kept good watch, and would not allow their little boys to go forward.

Brand would sometimes stand a whole hour, wistfully watching the youngsters as they played about the quarter deck; for he was very fond of children, and could never tire of hearing their merry voices.

Children were always attracted to him, too, in spite of his rough looks, as was exemplified by Iron-clad and Jolly-boat, who strongly rebelled against being kept away from their sailor friend, even when they were informed he was a criminal, and would teach them to rob people and cut their heads off.

A week out from Liverpool the Erato buried bows, windlass, and lee rail, as a sudden squall pounced upon her, driving her madly through the dark waters, everything cracking and humming. Up went her three studding-sail booms, with the canvas attached, breaking clear of the yards, and whirling straight into the air, while the fore and main sheets, tearing off the cleets to which they were attached, waved about like the trunks of mad elephants, until the sails were torn to tatters.

Topsails and top-gallant sails were mere bundles of rags by the time they were furlled, and just as the men returned to the deck away went the fore and mizen topmasts with a loud crash. The wreck was soon cleared, but a heavy sea was now running, and a strong north-west gale was tossing the spray into clouds all around the ship. She leaked badly, and the men were set to work at the pumps.

Drenched through and through, the gallant fellows toiled manfully—Brand especially, who seemed a stranger to fatigue—until about midnight, when a fearful cry rang through the vessel, as, caught by the stern, she rolled over on her beam ends, wallowing in an instant in the trough of the sea, preparatory to plunging out of sight for ever.

Jack Brand, darting aft, just as the quarter-boat was lowered, contrived to get the two mothers and their children into it before the ship went down. She sank with a gurgle, like the roaring of a whirlpool, and many of her shrieking crew and passengers went down with her, and were never seen again. Such must have been the fate of Brand but for his clinging to a breaker—a small cask—which, by a great sea, was washed beyond the suction power of the fated craft. Soon the man was helped into the cutter, which now contained ten persons, among whom was only one of the ship's officers, the rest having perished.

"Who is it?" inquired Mrs. Links, eagerly, as Brand was dragged from the sea. "Is it he? Oh, tell me, is it my husband?"

"I think it is," gasped the widow, joyfully. "I think—"

"No, ma'am, it's Brand," interrupted a seaman. "Your poor husband is lost, I'm afraid."

The bereaved mother uttered a piercing cry of grief, while Mrs. Clyde murmured, in an undertone—

"Yes, it is only that 'criminal' after all."

She had not intended that Jack should hear her; but he was unfortunately to leeward of her, so that the words reached him, piercing his heart like a knife.

With much difficulty the boat was now kept head to sea; several men it was only saved from being swamped by Brand, who threw a weight of his heavy body to windward in time to right it before could roll over.

The gale abated at morn, but no ship was in sight. Day after day passed, and still the castaways watched in vain for a sail. Their sufferings from thirst and hunger were dreadful; they had tasted nothing since the loss of the ship, except half a cup of water, and one biscuit a piece.

The two little boys had lost their spirits. Pale, thin, and sad, they would recline upon their mothers' bosoms, longing for food and drink, yet seldom asking for it in a voice above a whisper. Words may not describe the anguish of the women, doomed to see the parched lips of their children turned wistfully toward the blue water, and to hear their feeble moans, without the power to relieve them. The little fellows grew weaker and weaker every day, and one morning there was not a man in the boat who believed they could live forty-eight hours longer, unless assistance should arrive in the meantime. Little Iron-clad—a poor specimen of an iron-clad now—seeing a small spheroidal drop of dew on the boat's gunwale, half turned in his mother's arms and put out a thin hand toward the treasure; then closed his eyes mournfully as the drop was washed away by an intruding wave.

Now an ominous whisper went round among the half-starved crew, and their glaring eyes were turned wistfully and significantly toward the children.

Suddenly one of the men spoke out:—

"The little ones can't live long," he said; "they are almost dead now, and it would be a mercy, I'm thinking, both to them and to us, to kill 'em for meat."

"No! no! Oh, God, no!" moaned the frightened women, hugging the skeleton treasures to their bosoms.

But the men were half mad with hunger; one of them drew his knife with the air of a butcher.

"Hold!" cried another. "We'll only kill one child at present; the mothers shall draw lots for him that's to die."

Vainly the women entreated and expostulated, offering to sacrifice their own lives for their children's.

The sailors were inexorable, and the poor creatures were obliged to make the drawing.

Mrs. Clyde pulled the unlucky slip. Her child must die! In wild agony she rose, straining her offspring to her bosom, and glaring like a wounded lioness upon the man who came to deprive her of it.

"Ah, my God! Kill me a thousand times over!" she shrieked, "but touch not a hair of his little head!"

Up started Jack Brand.

"Let not a man touch that child," sounded with half-smothered roar his starved voice. "Take me instead of him."

Then, drawing his sheath-knife, he plunged it into his side, and fell upon the bottom of the boat.

Eagerly the madmen rushed towards him, and thus the life of little Iron-clad was spared.

A quarter of an hour later a sail hove in sight. It was signalled, and the castaways were soon picked up and taken aboard the vessel, which proved to be the barque Warren, of Charleston.

Brand still breathed, and the captain, who was something of a doctor, declared that his wound was not mortal. He was right. With the aid of proper remedies poor Jack was, in a few days, a good convalescent.

He had a kind nurse in Mrs. Clyde, who was full of boundless gratitude for the man who had so nobly saved her child. She felt as if she could never make sufficient reparation for the manner in which she had treated him while aboard the Erato.

One morning, when little Iron-clad lisped out that he wished Brand was "his papa," the lovely widow smiled, and looked so charming, that Jack was emboldened to propose to her, there and then.

She gave him her hand, and they were married a few months after reaching New York.

Brand, being a well read, intelligent man, as well as a thorough sailor, he and his wife, with their little Iron-clad in tow, are steering a pleasant course along the river of life.

## ALL IN VAIN.

We watch for the feet at the garden gate,  
With eyes that are almost dim,  
And our hearts are sore from the cruel fate  
That for years has learned us to watch and wait  
For the joys that will never begin.

We cling to the links of the broken chain  
With the tenderness of love,  
And watch with a hope, as the bright days wane,  
That at last we can gather them up again  
In the fields that bloom above.

There are loved ones dear whose lips we press  
To our own, in our bitter woe;  
For we never knew, as their years grew less,  
And the sweet eyes closed we had learned to bless,  
We had loved them so.

And we watch from the echoless, pathless shore,  
For a hand to clasp our own,  
As they did in the beautiful days of yore;  
But now they have strayed thro' the golden door,  
And kneel at their Father's Throne.

And we lift our voices and call in vain  
On the ones who went before,  
But their ears are closed, and our tears and pain  
Will never be soothed by their smiles again  
On the other and bitter shore.

For we would not list to the truths they told  
With their trembling, tearful eyes,  
And our sinful hearts were cold—so cold,  
That our souls will never with joy unfold  
In the light of Paradise!

## THE COT IN THE VALLEY I LOVE.

THERE's a spot that I love in a bright sunny vale,  
Where whole hours I've listened to song  
Of the redbreast and thrush, as the soft balmy gale  
Bore the notes of their chanting along.

On a green mossy bank, 'neath a large spreading tree.  
In the deep heat of noon, I have lain  
And watched the light shadows, so sportive and free,  
Chase each spirit-like form o'er the plain.

I've sat there till eve drew her beautiful veil  
O'er the radiant face of the day,  
When the moon from her chamber came forth ghostly and pale,  
And majestically passed on her way.

I've watched the bright stars as they coyly would peep  
Through the thick waving leaves of the tree,  
And thought I were blest if at last I might sleep  
With such eyes to keep watch over me.

A sweet quiet cot in the vale might be seen  
Around whose low, moss-covered eaves  
Too young twining woodbine, so tender and green,  
Spread out its rich covering of leaves.

That green, sunny vale will be dear to my heart  
Though wide o'er the earth I may roam,  
And that low, quiet cot, with its vine-covered walls,  
I shall ever remember as home.

## CHO-CHE-BANG; AN ORIENTAL ROMANCE.

## CANTO I.

AWAY, far off in China, many, many years ago,  
(In the hottest part of China, where they never heard of snow),  
There lived a rich old planter, in the Province of Ko-Whang,  
Who had an only daughter, and her name was Cho-Che-Bang.  
The maiden was a jewel, a Celestial beauty rare,  
With narrow, slanting eyebrows, and carrot-coloured hair;  
One foot was scarce three inches long, the other knew no bounds;  
She numbered fourteen summers—and she weighed three hundred pounds.

## CANTO II.

On the dreary shores of Lapland, 'mid their never-ending snow,  
Where the Aurora Borealis in her ruddy beauty glows,  
Lived a little dwarfish tinker, who in height stood three feet two,  
And from his endless shivering they called him Chi-Chil-Bloo.  
This crooked little tinker, as he dragged his weary way  
From hut to hut, to ply his craft, scarce seemed of human clay  
His eyes were like two marbles, set in little seas of glue,  
His cheeks a sickly yellow, and his nose a dirty blue.

## CANTO III.

Now, Chi-Chil-Bloo, though born in snow and reared upon its  
breast,  
Loved not the bleak, chill land where dwelt the spirit of unrest;  
He bid adieu unto the scenes of never-ending storm,  
And travelled forth to find some land where he could keep him warm.

He trudged two years his weary way, far from the land of snow,  
Inside the walls of China, whither strangers seldom go,  
When, wearied with his pilgrimage, he halted at Ko-Whang,  
And there fell in with old Ski-Hi, the father of Che-Bang.  
The old man heard his wondrous tale of sights that he had seen,  
Where nature wore a winding sheet, and shrouded all things green.  
And pondering o'er, within his mind, if wonders such could be,  
At last engaged poor Chi-Chil-Bloo to cultivate his tea.

## CANTO IV.

It had always been the custom of the fairy-like Che-Bang,  
Ere evening's shadows fell upon the valley of Ko-Whang,  
To wander 'mid the tea groves, like an Oriental queen,  
On the shoulders of her servants in a fancy palanquin.  
As she merged from out the shadow of a Chinaberry tree,  
She espied the little tinker stripping down the fragrant tea;  
She gazed upon his wondrous form, his eyes, his nose of blue—  
A moment gazed, then deeply fell in love with Chi-Chil-Bloo.  
She stepped from out the palanquin, and there dismissed her train,  
With instructions that an hour past, they might return again;  
She then upraised the filmy veil that hid her charms from sight,  
And poor Chi-Chil-Bloo beheld a face to him surpassing bright.

## CANTO V.

He gazed transfixed with wonder; to him surprising fair  
Were her rounded-up proportions and salmon-coloured hair.  
He lingered in a dreamy trance, nor woke he from his bliss,  
Till her loving arms entwined him and her lips imprint a kiss.  
She led him to a bower, and beside the dwarf she knelt,  
And sighed, like Desdemona, at his "scapes by flood and field";  
He told of seals and reindeer, and bears that live at sea;  
He told her tales of icicles, and she told tales of tea.

## CANTO VI.

Long, long they fondly lingered thus—locked in each other's arms;  
She saw in him, and he in her, a thousand glowing charms;  
When looking down the distant vale, the sun's fast fading sheen  
Fell faintly on the gold of her returning palanquin.  
"Yonder come my slaves," she cries, "and now, Chi-Chil-Bloo, we part;  
My father—oh, my father has a cruel, flinty heart—  
He has promised me to Chow-Chow, the Crosses of Ko-Whang,  
But Chow-Chow's old and gouty, and he won't suit Che-Bang."

## CANTO VII.

"Oh, come beneath my window at a quarter after three,  
When the moon hath gone a-bathing at her bath-room in the sea,  
And we will fly to other lands across the ocean blue;  
But hush! here comes the palanquin, and now, sweet love, adieu!"  
They placed her in her palanquin, her bosom throbbing free,  
While Chi-Chil-Bloo seemed busy picking up his gathered tea;  
As rested from his weary rounds the dying god of day,  
They raised her on their shoulders and they trotted her away.

## CANTO VIII.

At the time and place appointed, 'neath the lattice stood her  
dwarf;  
He whistled to his lady, and she answered with a cough.  
She threw a silken ladder from her window down the wall,  
And he, brave knight, stood fixed beneath to catch her, should she fall.  
She reached the ground in safety—one kiss, one chaste embrace,  
Then she waddled and he trotted off in silence from the place.

## CANTO IX.

Swift, swift they held their journey; love had made their footsteps  
light;  
They hid themselves at morning's dawn, and fled again at night,  
The second night had buried day, and folded up her pall,  
When they reached the sentry's station underneath the mighty  
wall.  
Che-Bang told well her tale of love; Chi-Chil-Bloo told his, alas!  
The sentry had no sentiment, and wouldn't let him pass;  
But he called a file of soldiers, and took them to Dun Brown,  
The chief, the local magistrate, the mufti of the town.

## CANTO X.

Dun Brown, half Turk, half Tartar, was the terror of the land,  
And ruled his special province with an iron, bloody hand—  
A pompous, bloated mandarin, as rich as Scripture Dives,  
He'd the wisdom of old Solomon, and twice as many wives.  
This vile old fellow heard the charge, the tempting maiden eyed,  
Then feigning well a burning rage, in dreadful tones he cried,  
"You vile, misshapen scoundrel—you despoiler, rascal, elf,  
I sentence you to prison, and I take Che-Bang myself."  
He took her to his harem, and when he went to dine  
He sent her bird's nest chowder, and fat puppies done in wine.  
But she spurned his dainty viands as she scorned to be his bride,  
She took to eating rat-soup—poisoned rat-soup—and she died.

## CANTO XI.

In a dark and dreary dungeon—its dimensions six by four—  
Lay the wretched little tinker, stretched upon the mouldy floor;  
The midnight gong had sounded, he heard a dreadful clang,  
And before her quaking lover stood the spirit of Che-Bang.  
"Arise, Chi-Chil-Bloo, arise!" it cried, "lay down life's weary load,  
Let out thy prisoned spirit from its dark and drear abode;  
And we will roam the spirit-land, where fortune smiles more fair,  
Arise," it cried, "and follow!" then vanished into air.

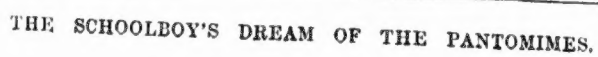
## CANTO XII.

On the morrow, when the jailer served around his mouldy beans  
(The only food the prisoner got, except some pickled greens),  
He started back with horror; high upon the doorway post  
Hung the body of the tinker, who had yielded up the ghost.

## CANTO XIII.

There's a legend still in China, that beneath the moon's pale  
sheen,  
Ever fondly linked together, may in summer time be seen,  
Still wand'ring 'mid the tea plants, in the Province of Ko-Whang,  
The little Lapland tinker and his spirit-bride Che-Bang.









THE SCHOOLGIRL'S DREAM OF THE PANTOMIMES,



## FORGIVEN AT LAST.

"I WILL never forgive you," she said, and turned, and went slowly and calmly away from the man who had been her lover—from the man whom she had loved better than her very life.

Out of her heart she said it—out of her very soul. He knew it, for he knew her. She was a woman who never uttered a hasty word, and never repented one that she had spoken. A rare woman, for, thank Heaven, most women are more impulsive and more forgiving.

But Caroline Lastrom had known nothing of woman's changing thought and speech. She had been brought up by her stern soldier father, and her elder brother—his father's very image, inwardly as well as outwardly—had been her companion; and meanness and deception were as strange to her as any unknown attributes of the devil's could be to us; and little tricks and stratagems were things to scorn.

Her domestic affairs were ordered as those of some orderly soldier might be. The word of command was given briefly and obeyed at once; otherwise a domestic court-martial was held, and the offender, so to speak, "drummed out of the camp."

Many an idle housemaid and "experienced" cook, used to the inconsistencies of other ladies, had tried to evade little eighteen-year old Miss Caroline's rules, and had received summary "warning without character." One astonished Hibernian damsel had been told to "take her things and go" for nothing but "a bit of a lie." "As if everybody didn't lie," said the astounded Bridget. "There'd be no gettin' along in this world if ye told the truth for ever."

But Miss Caroline thought differently.

The person who had attempted to murder her might have received her pardon; the person who deceived her never could.

When she said to Guy Hammond, "I will never forgive you," he had lied to her. Many a man tells the same small fib to the wife of his bosom two or three times a year; for this was all it was:—

The Christmas holidays had passed without his presence, and Caroline had been sad and uneasy on account of his absence, for he had promised to come to them for the whole week. And yet she had felt her face flush with her pride of him when he said on their meeting:—

"Business kept me, Lina. Duty before pleasure, you know."

"Always," she said, fondly. "I had rather miss you than know you had neglected duty for me—far, far rather."

An hour afterwards it had come to her knowledge that Guy had spent that holiday at a pleasant country seat some miles from the old captain's homestead, amid fun and frolic, without the slightest business pretext or excuse.

At first she refused belief; then she challenged her lover with the fact. He winced beneath her glance, and blushed like a girl.

"Hal Atwood asked me," he said. "Upon my word I could not get out of it. I thought of you all the while. I did not enjoy myself. But Hal and his sister Bell made me go—upon my word they did."

"But why deceive me?" asked Caroline.

"Deceive, Lina dear? It seemed as though I preferred Bell's—that is their—society to yours. I—really, I meant the best."

"You lied to me," said Caroline. "You said business kept you."

"Can't you forgive me? On my soul I thought of you every moment—I—"

"I would have believed that a week ago," said Caroline. "Now I cannot believe one word you say; you have uttered a deliberate lie. It is not spending a week at Atwood Grange—it is deceiving me, that is your crime. I should not have doubted your love because of a week's absence, but I shall perpetually doubt it now. I must beg you to understand that our engagement is at an end, Mr. Hammond. I cannot marry a man I do not respect."

And Guy had sunk upon his knee, and had caught the folds of her robe in his hands and sobbed—

"Forgive me, Caroline—for Heaven's sake, forgive me."

And she had said—

"I never will forgive you," and was gone.

He was thinking over all this now as he sat by the camp fire in the dusk of the evening. For a year he had been a soldier. In the Crimea he had been the wonder of his comrades; for, brave as they were, they valued life a little; he—not one whit. He had bared his breast to the enemy's bullets. He had ridden into their very midst. He had been made prisoner, and had crossed the dread line and returned to the British camp scathless, and had been the only one left to tell of one terrible ambush in which a little scouting party had been swept from earth. Since that day they had called him Dare-devil Guy; and some of the ignorant common soldiers actually believed that he bore a charmed life, and was in league with his satanic majesty. He never smiled, he never laughed. He was no longer the merry Guy Hammond who could not resist Bell Atwood's invitation at Christmas-tide, and who fibbed to hide the truth from his betrothed. Losing Caroline, he had learned how well he loved her, and had lost with her life's brightness.

And now, as he bent over the fire, reading the past in the red embers, she was near him. He had seen her name upon the list of nurses sent to the temporary hospital which rose against the moonlight sky beyond the fires. He had even caught a glimpse of her dark-robed figure passing from pillow to pillow.

He wondered whether she knew where he was—whether in those hours of danger when the soldier's life hung by so slight a thread she might not be brought to listen to him, to remember the past, and to forgive. She was Caroline Lastrom still. No one else claimed her. There was some hope in that, or would have been had she been any other woman.

To-morrow a battle would be fought. Something in Guy Hammond's breast told him that the charm which had been upon his life was past; that the morrow would be a dark day for him—dark, perhaps, as death itself.

"If I only could see her to-night," he said to himself. "If I could only hear her say, 'I forgive you, Guy,' I could die content, or I could live, thanking God for life."

And with these words he arose and crept to the entrance of the tent and looked in. A sentry paced before the entry of the tent, and lowered his bayonet as Guy approached. Guy knew what that meant. No one could enter without an order. It was hard to get one at that hour. The commanding officer was sleeping—snatching a few hours of much-needed rest. Yet he must see Caroline. He must.

He went up to the sentinel. It was a man in his own company. "For Heaven's sake, my good fellow," he whispered, "let me speak to that lady!—the nurse with the black hair yonder. She's a dear old friend of mine, and— The truth is I think there is a bullet marked for me to-morrow. I'd like to see her before I die."

"You frightened, Sir?" said the man. "You know I must obey orders. But there's a way to get in and call her at the back. I shan't see you, Sir."

And Guy said "Thank you," and in a moment more had touched Caroline upon the shoulder. She turned and looked at him, and knew him, and he saw her pale and tremble.

"Caroline," he said, "it's so long since we met—five years. We had no thought of such scenes when we parted. You are in mourning."

"My brother fell for his country a month ago," she answered. "My father only lived to hear the news."

"You are alone, then?"

"Quite alone," she said; "alone in the wide world."

"And I have known nothing of your trouble; I have not been able to comfort you," said Guy. "Oh, Caroline—"

She looked away from him.

"I dare not stay here long," he said. "I have stolen a few moments to speak to you. I have not forgotten the past; have you?"

"No," she said, quietly, "I forget nothing."

He saw her heart beating beneath her black dress, and caught her hand.

"Caroline," he said, "I was to blame; but, Heaven knows, I have repented. Forgive me, Caroline!"

And for a moment he thought she had relented, but the next she drew her hand from his and shrunk from him.

"I have loved you so!" he said. "I have so repented; and I have a strange fancy that to-night is my last on earth. If it should be so, give me comfort for my dying hour. Say you forgive me, Caroline."

And Caroline trembled and turned from him, and resisting the yearning impulse to cling to him and forgive him, forced from her cold lips these words—each one a drop of heart's blood.

"I told you I never would forgive you. I never will."

And as she had left him once, she left him again, and he went out into the night without a word.

The thunder of battle awoke the day. Those within the hospital heard the crash and roar—the wounded men who longed to be among their comrades, and were almost maddened by their compelled passiveness; and the doctors and nurses who made ready for the new sufferers soon to be brought in from the scene of conflict; those who watched Caroline Lastrom saw her grow pale every moment, until she looked more like a corpse than a living woman. Yet when the wounded, the dying, and the dead were brought in she took her place bravely where she was most needed, and shrank from no ghastly sight, no sickening task, until, when the battle was at its height and the litters came in fastest, she saw on one a blood-stained pallid face—the blue eyes wide open, searching wildly for some one or something, and knew it was Guy Hammond.

Then for a moment she staggered and clung for support to one of the rude tent posts. Only for a moment. The next she knelt beside him.

She had been looking for him from the first. She had known what was coming, and for hours she would have given any earthly possession, any earthly good, to have remembered that she had forgiven him.

Her pride had been strong when she turned from him, yet it had trembled when the first cannon boomed above the field—had turned traitor as the battle raged, and fled forever when she saw him lying helpless there before her.

She lifted his head upon her arm, and pressed her lips to his brow.

"Guy! Guy!" she whispered, and she saw the lips move faintly.

"Forgive," they seemed to say, and she answered:—

"My darling, I forgive you."

And the world grew dark before her, and she fell fainting to the ground.

After that she knew no more for days and weeks. Mad fever dreams filled her brain; she was everything but herself—she was everywhere but in this world—until one day she opened her eyes upon a white-curtained bed, a quiet room, and a figure bending over its knitting work near a pleasant window.

For a while she only saw and did not understand; but slowly memory returned—the hospital tent—the dying form by which she had knelt—her Guy dying—and it seemed to her that all the firm resolve and bravery on which she had prided herself had quite deserted her. She was only a feeble girl now, and the tears came to her eyes, and she felt her heart breaking, and she murmured:—

"I forgave him too late. Oh, Guy, Guy!" and the nurse turned and came to her.

"You are better," she said: "a great deal better, miss," and she knew her own servant, Martha.

But Caroline could only weep; she did not want to be better; she longed to die and to be laid with Guy under the sod.

"Have I been ill long?" she asked.

"Two months, miss," said the nurse.

"Where have they laid him?" she asked after a pause. "Guy Hammond, I mean, Martha. Did he speak of me at last? Did he know I forgave him?"

The nurse looked mystified.

"He seems to think so, miss," she said. "He comes every day."

"Comes!" Caroline tried to sit up in bed, and fell back again.

"Comes! Is he not dead, then?"

"Bless you, dead!" said Martha. "No more than you, miss. He's as well as he can be, if he has lost an arm, poor fellow! Why, that's his knock now! Will you see him?"

And before Caroline could answer she had opened the door for Guy, and Guy, with his anxious, earnest face and his empty sleeve pinned to his breast, was bending over her.

Caroline had forgiven him once as we forgive the dying all their sins against us. She never revoked her forgiveness, and when the spring brought health and strength to her once more, the two were married, and live, and we hope will live like the familiar king and queen of fairy tales, forever happily together.

## THE FAWN OF THE CALICOON.

Or all the chiefs of the Delawares none were more powerful than Lackawan, whose village was built beneath the great oaks that overhang the falls of the Calicoon. Famous on the warpath, eloquent in debate, and full of wisdom at the council, all the warriors far and near looked up to him as one gifted by the Great Manitou, and to be feared and respected for his gifts.

He had one child, the beautiful Memaree, the "Fawn of the Calicoon," as she was called, upon whom many a young brave had looked with admiration, for no maiden of the tribe was so graceful in form, so light of foot, so beautiful in feature. Her eyes were like that of a singing bird, her eyes wild and brilliant as ever shone with entrancing light upon a love-stricken soul.

Her father's idol, she was the jewel of his lodge. When she was not near, he grieved that he had no son to take his rifle and hatchet when he died, and to emulate his deeds, while he carried down a name feared by his enemies and revered by his friends. But when he looked on her his sadness vanished, and he said to himself—

"She is good and beautiful, with my blood thick in her veins. A great chief will make her his wife, and I shall live to see her sons mighty in the hunt and terrible on the war-path."

And that was light and comfort to his heart.

One evening, in the leafy summer-time, he sat in front of his lodge watching for the return of Memaree, who had been absent all the day. He was not alarmed for her absence, because nearly every day, with her bow or her fishing-rod in hand, she wandered along the banks of the beautiful river, sometimes alone, and again with young maidens of the tribe.

The setting sun was casting its crimson and gold upon the tree-tops when he saw her returning, not gay and laughing as usual, but quiet and pensive, her eyes seeming to study the flowers and grass over which she walked.

When she came very near his brow grew suddenly dark as the thundercloud which overhangs the face of the storm. He saw around her neck a chain of gold, delicate and beautifully wrought, and he remembered he had seen it worn by a young hunter of the pale-faces, who had hunted and fished in that neighbourhood at intervals for several moons.

He did not rise to meet his child, or press his lip upon her forehead, as he had always done before, and she seemed so lost in thought that she did not notice his neglect. She was passing him to enter the lodge when he spoke in a voice so cold and stern that she looked up at him with a wild and frightened expression on her face.

"Where did Memaree get that?" he asked, sternly, and he pointed to the glittering chain.

"It was given to me by Louis, the pale-faced hunter," she said, looking in wonder at his angry face.

"Go cast it into the river!" said Lackawan, sternly. "I hate the pale-face and all his race! They come to drive the red man from his home! Their tongues are forked like the tongues of snakes! Their hearts are black! Go cast the white man's gift into the water as a sacrifice to the Spirit of the Cataract! Lackawan has spoken!"

Memaree stood and trembled, while the red blood came and went in alternate flushes and chills in her face. But she did not obey her father. She pressed her hand over her heart to still its wild throbbing, and when he looked up angrily, surprised that for the first time she was disobedient, she said in a low, sad tone—

"How long is it since Lackawan has ceased to love his child? How long since poor Memaree has lost the warm nest in her father's heart, wherein she has reposed from her birth?"

"Lackawan loves his child," said the chief, coldly, for his heart was yet full of anger. "He would see her the wife of a Delaware brave—the mother of great hunters and fearless warriors. The blood of the pale-face is thinner than water and more bitter than gall. It cannot mingle with the blood of Lackawan. If the pale-faced hunter is seen again near this village he shall die!"

"Then slay him with thine own hand, chief of the Delawares!" said a manly voice close behind him. "The breast of Louis Degrell is bare. He fears not the rifle, the knife, or the tomahawk. He loves the beautiful Fawn of the Calicoon. He has told her so, and asked her to be his wife; and she has given him love for love—heart for heart. Strike, chief of the Delawares, but know that the blow which sends me to the happy hunting-grounds, will rob thee of a daughter. Take from the Fawn the life that she loves, and she will pine away and die!"

"It is true, oh my father! The pale-faced hunter has spoken well."

And Memaree looked sadly up, for her eyes had been cast down and she trembled from head to foot, while her lover was speaking.

Lackawan trembled too. Not from fear, for he never knew fear. His great frame shook from the wrath which he was striving to keep chained within him until he was ready to give it vent.

At the first sound of the white hunter's voice the chief had wheeled on his heels and faced him. There he stood, that young man with large blue eyes, with golden hair and a face with the mingled colour of the lily and the rose. Tall, slight in figure, yet full of strength and muscle, no warrior in the tribe of Lackawan was better formed. None looked more fearless than he when he tore aside his fringed hunting shirt and defiantly bared his bosom before the angry chief.

While he spoke he cast down the long rifle which he had carried on his arm, and threw his knife and hatchet on the ground.

"Strike, chief of the Delawares, strike! I have no arms, and were they in my hands I would not use them against the father of Memaree. Give me the Fawn, or kill me where I stand!"

Lackawan was too brave himself not to respect courage even in a hated pale-face. When he saw that the blue eyes steadily and calmly returned his angry gaze, that even though his hand was on the handle of his tomahawk, dented in a hundred battles, the hunter did not shrink an inch from the blow which he could strike, he felt a respect for him which hatred could not stifle.

"Go, pale-face, go while the heart of Lackawan is yet soft with love for his daughter. Go back to your people and find a wife among the squaws of your race. They are like the flowers of spring—go and plant one in your breast and forget that Memaree lives! Lackawan has spoken!"

"Chief of the Delawares, I have heard your words. If Memaree will say that she loves me—not that she has not given me her heart as I have given her mine—I will go, not back to my people, but to death! For I can not live without her. Let her speak!"

"Memaree will not lie," replied the Fawn. "She has spoken, and will not eat her words. She loves the white hunter better than she loves her life."

"Better than she loves her father?" asked Lackawan, turning his dark eyes quickly upon her.

"Better than she loves her father!" said Memaree, slowly and distinctly.

"Then shall the pale-face die!" cried Lackawan, his long suppressed anger bursting forth. "He is an evil spirit, and has enchanted Memaree. He is a robber, for he has stolen the love of my child from her father. He shall die!"

And his hatchet was drawn from the belt.

Louis Degrell did not move or quail in a single look.

But Memaree sprang between him and her father.

"Strike me first," she said, in a low and bitter tone. "It is best that the hatchet of a warrior should drink the blood of a squaw before it is buried in the breast of an unarmed man."

"He shall not die by the hand of a warrior—he shall be burned at the stake!" cried Lackawan, fiercely.

And he gave a wild whoop which, ringing far and wide over the village and through the forest, brought more than a hundred warriors in front of his lodge before its echoes had died away among the distant hills.

"Sing the death song! Gather pine knots around the prisoner's stake!" cried Lackawan. "This pale-face would rob the tribe of the daughter of its chief. He must die!"

Wild yells of delight broke from the throats of the warriors who had heard these words. Some hurried to the forest to gather fuel for the fearful sacrifice, others bound the manly limbs of the hunter and carried him to the tall stake in the middle of the village, which was burned and charred by many a previous fire. All chanted the hoarse death-song, while they hurried to the dreadful work. All this time Memaree stood with folded arms, still as a statue. She did not breathe a word for her lover's life. She knew that she might as well ask the wounded panther, or the mad wolf, to be merciful, as to plead to her angry father then.

And she had his blood in her veins. Her heart was planning his punishment even while he was giving orders for her lover's death.

Lackawan would not look at her now. He was afraid she would ask him to relent with her eyes, if not with her lips, and he dared not meet her gaze. Slowly, but proudly, he walked out to the stake, to which the pale-face now was bound.

The hunter looked calmly and defiantly yet upon him.

"Pale-face, the chief of the Delawares does not thirst for thy blood. If he speaks you can live. Promise to go alone to thy people, and never to come again to trouble the red man's peace, and thou art free."

"I will not promise," said the doomed hunter, firmly.

Lackawan said no more, but motioned to a warrior who stood by with a blazing brand in his hand.

In a moment the gathered faggots were all ablaze. As the fire leaped high round that noble form, Lackawan looked to see terror painted in the white man's face. But no change was there. A smile of triumph only could be seen, but the blue eyes looked towards the river, where, in snowy foam, it dashed over the rocks, into an eddying whirlpool below.

Lackawan looked towards the cataract also. And the sight he saw drove the sternness of the warrior from his breast in an instant. He was a father once more. There, upon a rock which overhung the rushing waters, stood Memaree waving a wild farewell to her dying lover.



With a despairing shout, the chief rushed towards the river, in the vain hope that he might yet save her from the fearful fate she courted. But, long before he could get to the spot her form was seen for an instant in the air, her face and her arms turned towards the flames which were licking up the last sigh of her lover, then it disappeared in the wild vortex of angry waters. It was never seen in life again.

But go now to the falls of the Calicoon, when the mist rises thick above them, and you will see a pale-faced hunter and an Indian maiden moving hand-in-hand in its midst.

Lackawan went back to his wigwam, wrapped his blanket round his head, and sat down. He never spoke again—never touched food or drink. Nine days thus he grieved for his loss, and then his spirit went to the hunting grounds of the other world.

From that day the glory and strength of his tribe began to fade, and to wither; their enemies came upon them with destruction in their hands; the pale-face drove the game from their forests; soon they were but a handful of dried leaves on the whirlwind of fate; they were swept away, and now not a trace is left of them in the beautiful region were they dwell.

#### HOW I WAS MARRIED.

I AM blessed or cursed, I really do not know which, with a special weakness that resolve as I may to overcome will manifest itself in the presence of any member of the opposite sex—whether young or old, plain or beautiful in feature. My mental want is assurance! I am timid, bashful, reticent, nervous in the presence of ladies. Even my mother is to this day—and I am husband of one of the sweetest creatures that ever wore a *jupon*—provoked at what she is pleased to term my unreasonable conduct in the presence of members of her sex.

"John," she exclaims, upon occasions, "don't—don't! Remember that you are a man—a married man, with a beard on your face—it is red, I know, and your father's was black—and a responsibility daily expected!"

To which I reply, with a desperate attempt at self-possession—

"Mother, I can't. It isn't in me."

"Poor boy!" she then begins to muse, speaking her thoughts in a loud voice, but in an absent-minded sort of way. "Poor boy! He isn't a bit like his father, who was the coolest-headed man I ever knew, and who insisted on marrying me when I had told him for the hundredth time I didn't care for him, and that I was engaged to another—to Henry White, poor fellow," added my dear mother, with a sigh. "I do wonder where he is now?"

And now that I have thus given, with the assistance of my mother's very able tongue, an account of myself, the reader will very naturally inquire how it came about that one so very much of a coward in the presence of any member of the gender feminine could have found so lovely a girl, with a dozen of handsome fellows following at her heels and keeping the atmosphere about her positively warm, even in the most frigid weather, with their hot sighs, to marry him, and make him ever after, "the happiest dog alive."

Anticipating such a question, I shall now proceed to answer by saying that—

In the street in which I first saw the light of day there was an odd-looking building, said to have been erected many years ago by an eccentric bachelor, known to the multitude who daily pass its doors as "Number Two." Indeed, I never heard those who resided within its shadows called by a name. The moment any one moved into it, in conventional estimation, they lost their patronymic—whether it was Jones, Brown, or that still more uncommon one, Smith—and were simply known as the people at Number Two.

In my very boyish days I used to walk up and down the pavement opposite this house, and wonder what sort of a place it was within; whether it harboured ghosts; was the store-house for unimaginable quantities of gold and silver, and precious stones; and if the people who entered its gloomy portals ever came out into the world again.

"Number Two" was my terror by day and by night. How I longed to explore its chambers, and passage-ways, and pantries, and yet, when, even at high noon, I approached it, an indefinable feeling of dread, accompanied by a cold sweat, would steal over me.

Do not take me to be a coward, for I am not. When a lad, I never saw the boy of my years and size I was afraid to meet in a fair stand-up fight, and since I have arrived at what are called "years of discretion," I have been so indiscreet as to pummel into a condition very analogous to jelly, brawny fellows who were, presuming on their size, unwise enough to offend me by encroaching upon my dignity.

As I grew in years, "Number Two" to me continued to increase in mysteriousness. Many families had moved into it by the front door during the interval of time which had elapsed between my short short frock days and puberty, but although I passed the mysterious castle daily on my way to and from school, I never saw one go out that way with their penates.

It always seemed to me as if they were driven by some horrible monster, with glaring, fascinating eyes, into a profound vortex, placed somewhere in the cellar; and so gradually was this done, that no one ever thought of missing "Number Two's" family, supposed to be in possession, and the one which would suddenly appear at the front door insisting upon taking their furniture, &c., into the ever-hungry house that never opened its hall-door except it was to swallow into its mighty stomach big and little people, bedsteads and bedding, chairs, tables, pots, pans, &c., &c.

When I had arrived at the respectable age of twenty, there came to reside at "Number Two"—so my mother hinted to me at the supper-table one night—two friends of her, an elderly woman and her daughter; and she trusted I would endeavour to be less embarrassed than usual, should these people (doomed to be swallowed by the ogre, it occurred to me as she spoke) call to see her while I was present.

"And John," added my mother, while she tenderly caressed me, "as I know you inherit weakness, I thought I'd break the ice between you and Ellen—a sweet, retiring girl, who had no father or big brother to care for her, and accompany her in her rides and walks, for you know girls, like boys, must have exercise—by borrowing from her mother her miniature, that you might, at your leisure, peruse her features. Is she not lovely?" she added, in her most confidential whisper, as she handed me the portrait, which was attached to a blue ribbon.

My hand shook, as if stricken with some nervous affliction, as I put it forth to take and read, as requested, the young lady's features.

"I can't, mother," I said. "I—I—"

"You foolish boy!" cried my parent. "Do you think it will eat you? Or that she whom it represents, would hurt you, even if she had the power?"

"No, no, mother! I'm foolish, I know, but I really cannot help it."

"Well, then, open wide your eyes, and I will hold up Ellen's face for your inspection. It won't bite," she laughingly added, as she saw me raise my eyes to the portrait. "Isn't she sweet?"

"Yes, yes; she is—very—very beautiful. But—but—don't introduce me, please; besides, if she remains long enough at 'Number Two,' she'll suddenly disappear, like the rest of them, and never be heard of again."

"Why, child, what do you mean?" asked my mother.

"Oh, nothing; only it seems to me that whoever goes into 'Number Two' to live is gradually swallowed up in the earth. I never saw any move out of it."

"Nonsense," was the reply. "John, you're not a fool; but you are decidedly whimsical at times, I must confess."

While we were speaking, the front door bell rang, and before it had ceased its jingle, my mother sprang to her feet, and cried—

"Dear me! there they are, just in time!"

"Who—who?" I cried, half-frightened out of my senses.

"Who—who?"

"Why, child, Betsy Moran, and her pretty daughter, Ellen."

As she spoke, she moved towards the room door.

"Mother! mother!" I cried, in an agonized voice (the perspiration had suddenly started, and stood in great drops upon my brow), "wait—wait only a moment;" and I rose from the table, contemplating an immediate escape to my room, where I intended to double-lock the door and remain within for the rest of the day.

"Oh, John!" she cried, "I thought you were a man. Afraid of a petticoat? Ha! ha!"

While I was preparing for my exit, the girl in the kitchen must have rushed frantically up the basement stairs to answer the tinkling summons. I had not reached the door of the room in which I had been seated when it was suddenly thrown wide open, and there stood before me an elderly woman—an enormous hat, filled with flowers, crowning her head and shoulders. Behind her, peeping furtively over the edge of the lady's shawl, were a pair of laughing blue eyes—Ellen's eyes, I instinctively knew.

I groaned and staggered back. I do not know that I was about to fall; but my dear mother doubtless thinking I would, suddenly grasped me by the arm, and held me at her side until the introductions were over.

What was said on each side I have not the remotest idea. I only know that I was by the maternal conspirators—for such I conceived them to be—placed *vis-à-vis* to join Ellen; and, I dare say, I have never inquired into the facts of the case, I afforded that angel an infinite fund of amusement, for I noticed that every time I summoned courage enough to steal a glance at her pretty face, her eyes were dancing with fun.

"Oh," I said to myself, "if I could only look at her, and talk to her, and be reasonable with her; I should be so happy; but I'm a goose, and can't!"

How long I played dummy in Ellen's presence on that occasion I will not say. I could hear at the other end of the room a constant buzzing of voices. Our parents were in earnest conversation about something that seemed to interest them exceedingly.

Now and then there would come to my ears such words as "happy," "marriage," "Ellen," "John," "bashfulness," "timidity," "declarations," "love," "young enough yet," and so on. Ellen, I have not the slightest doubt, heard every word that was uttered, for occasionally she would laugh like a bird singing, so sweet was her voice. At such times the ladies at the other end of the room would suddenly suspend conversation and look our way; but frequently they would resume their talk, in a much lower key.

By-and-by—it seemed an age to me—our visitors rose to their feet, and readjusting their dresses and hats—I had noticed that it took some minutes to get the Betsy Moran flower-bed in its proper place—they departed for the ogre, "Number Two."

"Well, my dear," said my mother, as she stepped to my side and patted me on the shoulder as if I were yet a little fellow in a pinafore, "what have you to say about Ellen? Don't you know she is quite equal in beauty to her portrait—that it does not flatter her?"

"I—I really cannot say, mother," I answered. "I—I didn't have a good look at her."

My dear parent sighed deeply at this, and murmured something about incorrigible bashfulness; but what it was I had not time to inquire, for in the next moment she took the breath clear out of my body—that is for, all vocal purposes—by suddenly asking me—

"If I would like to marry, say in a year or two from now! You'll be old enough then, John." I stared at her.

"Why don't you answer?" she inquired, after a short pause, in a slightly irritated tone of voice.

"Mother," I managed to gasp out, "marry! I!"

"Yes," she responded, "why not? Your father did it before you, and although you are my own boy, I don't think you are a bit too good for so sweet a girl as Ellen Moran."

The cat was clean out of the bag. I saw my fate. My dear mother and the lady who owned the flower-bed hat, had entered into a deep conspiracy to persecute a poor devil who had done neither of them the least harm that he was aware of.

"Oh, mother," I cried in my agony, "spare me! spare me! Don't sacrifice me so early in life! You are not tired of me, are you. Say you are not—do."

My only parent, cruel for the first time in her life, as I then thought, laughed in my face as she hilariously hinted that one of these days I wouldn't be so frightened at a chignon or a petticoat as I then was.

I retired to my bed that night in a miserable frame of mind. To add to my mental agony, I would dream of Ellen Moran and her laughing blue eyes. When I awoke the next morning I resolved that I would assert my rights, and positively refuse to enter into any contract with the lady of my dreams.

At the breakfast table, and, I may add, for many days after, not a hint was thrown out about Ellen or her mother. I began to pluck up courage and resume my old habits. Only this change did I make in them—to avoid Number Two I would go streets out of my way.

Three months, six, nine, nay, twelve, passed by, and I never saw Ellen, and never spoke of her to my mother; but, notwithstanding my silence, her pretty face was ever in my mind; and my dear parent, I am satisfied, knew it by some psychological means which women possess, and by which they are enabled to read men's minds. I repeat, a whole year passed by, and perhaps another would have followed had not my maternal progenitor suddenly inquired at the table, after a silence of many minutes, if I ever intended to get married.

"Mother!" I said.

"Because, John, I know where you can get a pretty, and what is termed a good, wife."

I blushed crimson.

"You are a boy no longer," she resumed gravely, "and I would like to see you married before I die."

"Mother!" I whimpered.

"I have made arrangements with Mrs. Moran," she proceeded to say, "not heeding my exclamation, 'to marry you to Ellen, her daughter.'"

"Oh, mother!" I sobbed, in agony of spirit.

"Ellen loves you, and will make you a good wife. She consents—only she thinks you have not been so gallant or attentive to her as you ought to have been in view of your future relationship to her," continued the speaker, with a coolness that was really pleasant on that July night. "She is a good child, and as her wedding clothes are all ready we will have you two married on next Thursday—that is one week hence. So, John, there's a check for a couple of hundred—prepare yourself as becomes your position in society for the occasion."

I passed that week in a—I really do not know how. I only know that on the eventful Thursday there assembled a company of ladies and gentlemen at my mother's, among these were Ellen and her mother, the latter without that hat of portentous dimensions. In the morning a stout, bald-headed gentleman pronounced us husband and wife. I was no longer free, but I rejoiced.

Suddenly I felt that a load had been removed from my mind. My timidity had departed, and I became, for the first time, exceedingly funny, and joked with everybody, including the blushing Ellen, who would, despite the frowns of her mamma, laugh at and with me through the evening.

Well, that's all through with. It is an old story—nearly nine months old—and everybody, including Ellen, as comfortable as could be expected.

#### WAITING FOR SPRING.

We are waiting for the spring—  
Tired of snow, and frost, and sleet,  
Winter cannot be too fleet  
In its quickness of retreat;  
For we love to hear the music  
Of the bullfinch and the wren,  
As from fields and woody copse  
We shall hear them o'er again,  
As they sing.

We are waiting for the spring—  
Winter's reign long has been  
'Mong the poor with garments thin,  
Cause of suffering, want and sin:  
Yes the poor are patient, waiting,  
And they shall not wait in vain,  
For the changes time is making  
To their homes shall bring again  
Sunny spring.

We are waiting for the spring,  
For its soft and mellow days,  
For its sun's enlivening rays,  
For the softened twilight haze,  
Where is heard the cricket's chirping  
From the grass beside the door,  
When tiny wavelets, sparkling,  
Loosened, lave the pebbly shore,  
Murmuring.

We are waiting for the spring,  
For the bud and bloom of flowers,  
For the mantling of the bowers,  
For the sunshine and the showers;  
When around each window casement  
Vines shall creep and clamber up,  
While the daisy whispers love to  
The bright-eyed buttercup,  
In the spring.

#### SNOW-FLAKES.

Over the people the snow comes down—  
Over the misty town:  
Down in the grime  
And the slime  
Of crime;  
Down in the dust  
And the crust  
Of toll;  
Down from aloft,  
With its fleeces soft,  
To be lost in the trampled soil.

So, out of Heaven, fair love is sent—  
Freshly to mortals lent;  
Softly it falls  
Over walls  
And halls;  
Softly descends,  
Till it bends  
With life;  
Pure as the snow,  
Until lost below,  
In the tramp of earthly strife.

Lost in the tarnish and tramp of men—  
Sinking, but raised again;  
Out of the mire,  
To aspire,  
Yet higher;  
Out of low guise  
To arise  
Above;  
Climbing in mist,  
Until sweetly kissed  
By the sunlight of Heavenly love!

Nothing of Heaven is lost below;  
Earth cannot hide the snow;  
True love, be sure,  
Will endure,  
Still pure;  
True love must rise  
While the skies  
Exist;  
Even as the snow,  
From its stains below,  
Will be lifted in sunlit mist!

#### DRAWING-ROOM AMUSEMENTS FOR WINTER EVENINGS.

##### INGENIOUS EXPERIMENTS AND DEVICES.

###### THE TUMBLING EGG.

Fill a gill with quicksilver, seal it at both ends with hard wax; then have an egg boiled, take a small piece of the shell off the small end, and thrust in the gill with the quicksilver; lay it on the ground and it will not cease tumbling about so long as any heat remains in it: or if you put quicksilver into a small bladder, and blow it up, then warm the bladder, it will skip about so long as heat remains in it.

###### MONEY AUGMENTED BY AN OPTICAL ILLUSION.

In a large drinking glass of a conical shape (small at the bottom and wide at the top), put a shilling, and let the glass be half full of water; then place a plate on the top of it, and turn it quickly over, that the water may not escape. You will see on the plate a piece of coin the size of half-a-crown; and a little higher up, another, the size of a shilling.

It will add to the amusement this experiment affords, by giving the glass to one of the company (but who of course has not witnessed your operations), and desiring him to throw away the water, but save the pieces; he will not be a little surprised at finding only one.

###### THE MAGICAL TEASPOON.

Put into a crucible four ounces of bismuth, and when in a state of fusion, throw in two ounces and a half of lead, and one ounce and a half of tin: these metals will combine, forming an alloy fusible in boiling water. Mould the alloy into bars, and take them to a silversmith's to be made into teaspoons. Give one to a stranger to stir his tea, as soon as it is poured from the tea-pot; he will not be a little surprised to find it melt in his teaspoon.

###### TO CONSTRUCT AND INFLATE A SMALL BALLOON.

It is an interesting and amusing experiment to inflate a small balloon made of goldbeater's skin (using a little gum arabic to close any holes or fissures) filling it from a bladder or jar, and tying a thread round the mouth of it to prevent the escape of the gas. When fully blown, attach a car of fanciful coloured paper, or very thin pasteboard to it, and let it float in a large room; it will soon gain the ceiling, where it will remain for any length of time; if it be let off in the open air it will ascend out of sight. This experiment may be varied by putting small grains of shot into the car, in order to ascertain the difference between hydrogen gas and the atmospheric air.

(Continued on Page 14.)



## THE POISONER'S DAUGHTER.

LEAVING orders with Ben Isaacs for the corporal, he then left the pawnbroker's shop, wearing a disguise totally different from that with which he had entered it.

Meanwhile, Sir Edward Dudley, riding for dear life, was plunging through the streets of London with the speed of the wind; and it was not until he had reached an obscure and almost deserted quarter of the city that his mind began to dwell less upon his immediate safety than upon the face of the man whom he had struck down.

"Who was it?" he mused, as he still plunged on, with his beaver well over his eyes, and his cloak tossed over his shoulder, so that all his face was hidden. "He was disguised—I had time to see that. No blow can knock off a man's hair, beard, and eyebrows. Peste take my memory; for I have seen that face! Ho! I have it. It was the alchemist, Reginald Brame. Now, good luck to my fist for that good blow. Perhaps I killed him? No matter. He was a traitor—he and that serpent, Raymond St. Luke."

but the old cavalier grinned grimly, and pulled the trigger with a deadly aim.

The avaricious porter, who had merited death by hanging a score of times, threw up his arms and fell backward from the saddle.

He was dead before he reached the ground, for the bullet had crashed unerringly through his brain.

His companion was more fortunate, the second bullet of the cavalier striking the buckle of his breast-belt, and merely tumbling him breathless into the mire.

After this feat, Sir Edward resumed his flight, leaving the bodies of his two pursuers to the care of chance humanity.

"And now for temporary shelter in the house of Old Giles Goodwin, and then to escape to France," he mused, as he sped on, following the downward course of the Thames.

It was nearly night when he halted, not far from a large farmhouse, about half a mile from the river's edge, and fully twenty miles below London.

He dismounted, and having halted his weary horse in a thick clump of woods, moved cautiously towards the house.

that a fellow we saw lurking about when we landed was a spy; but let us talk after you have supped."

"And how do you intend to escape hence?" asked the baronet, as his friend led him into the house and then into a large room, where an aged but still hale and powerful man was seated.

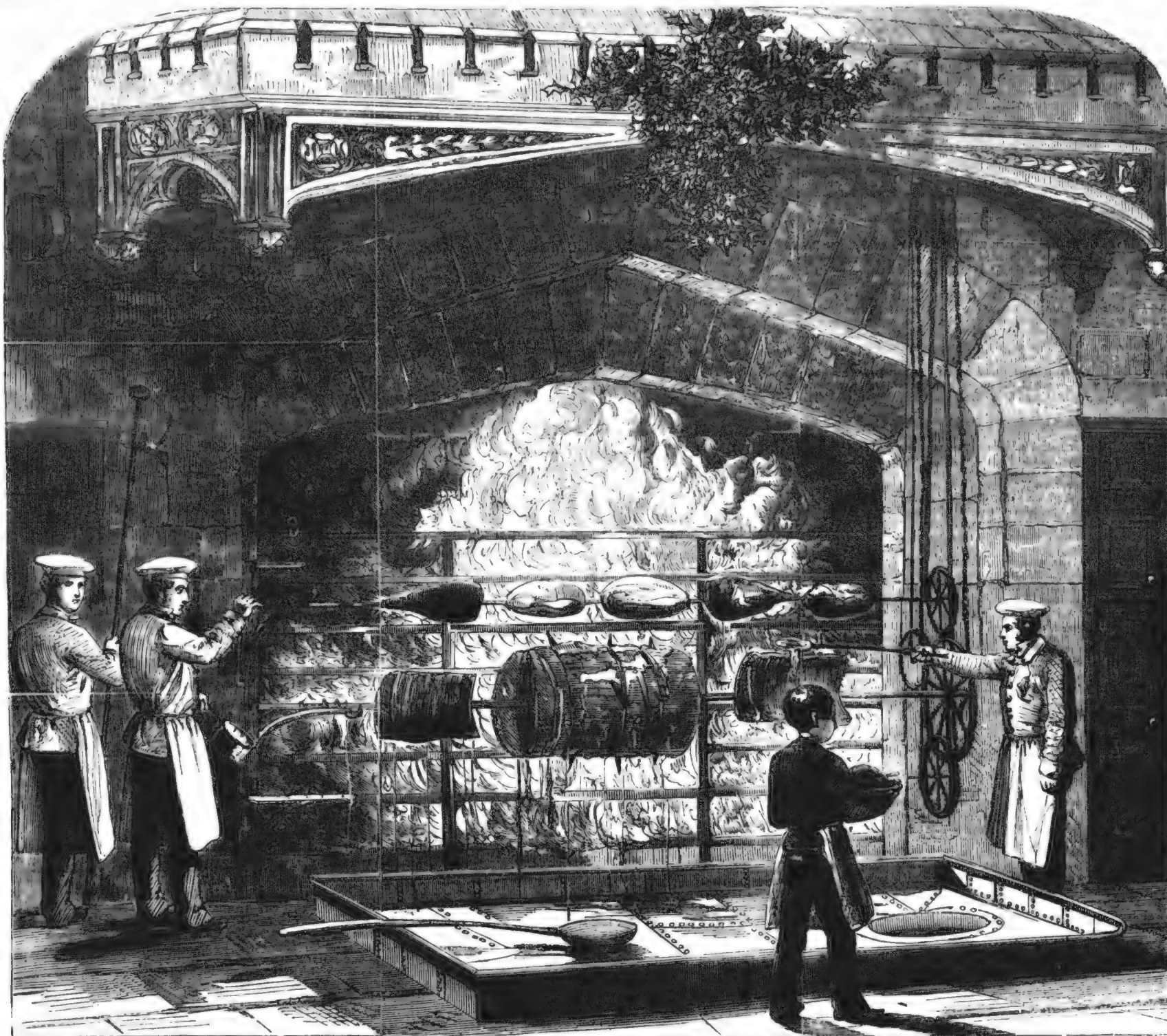
"That is for me to contrive, Sir Edward," said the old farmer, Giles Goodwin, rising and bowing with deep respect.

"Ha! my stout old friend! As hearty and loyal as ever!" cried Sir Edward, grasping the hand of the old man.

"Strong and unimpaired in sight, mind and hearing, though threescore and ten, Sir Edward, thank God! And were old Giles to live a thousand years, he'd pray thrice a day 'God save the King!'" replied the white-haired farmer, drawing his tall frame erect and swinging his smoking pipe around his head.

"Food and wine, Master Goodwin, and sparkling old ale, for the baronet is drooping with hunger and thirst," said Sir James, as Sir Edward sank into a chair.

"Show me a Roundhead, and perhaps he might find me still alive," observed the tough old cavalier, with a grim smile which showed his teeth. "Yet I would rather eat than fight just now."



THE KITCHEN AT WINDSOR CASTLE.

Glancing over his shoulder, after having walked his horse for some time to rest him, he saw, far down the lonely street a single horseman spurring towards him.

"Am I still pursued?" thought Sir Edward. "I thought I had thrown off the chase. Only one, eh?" he continued, pausing to regard the rider. "Perhaps he merely intends to keep me in sight to discover my hiding place. Ah, there follows another. It seems that I am really pursued by horsemen."

He rode on rapidly, though not at full speed, until an intervening house hid him from the view of those who pursued, and then backed his horse into a narrow alley, where he halted, and drew his pistols from his belt.

He was now in the suburbs of the city, and scarcely a person was to be seen in the narrow and miry street. It was evident that his two pursuers could not perceive him until they had come abreast the alley, through which he would have ridden, had it not terminated abruptly against a high wall.

He waited, and soon heard the plunging of the horses as their riders urged them through the mire of the unpaved street.

In another moment they came into view, and the baronet recognized the ill-looking visage of the porter, as the latter, in glancing about, recognized the baronet.

"Scoundrel! dog!" cried Sir Edward, levelling his pistols.

"It is still you, then?"

Master Ives made a vain effort to force his horse upon his haunches, so as to receive the bullet in the chest of the animal;

He had not gone far, and was in the act of climbing the tall rear garden fence, when a commanding voice shouted—

"Halt, or I fire!"

"The throne of England!" replied Sir Edward, pausing, and endeavouring to discern the speaker.

"Ah! Sir Edward Dudley by the voice!" said the unseen challenger, advancing from the shrubbery into the garden.

"The Earl of Branchland! I am right glad to greet you, my lord!" exclaimed the overjoyed baronet, as he sprang from his perch into the garden and grasped the hand of the earl. "We heard that your lordship was in England. Is his Majesty with you?"

"Would he were," said Sir James Howard, advancing from the shrubbery, where he had been keeping watch with the earl. "Or rather would he were in Holland or in France, or anywhere out of England."

"Then he did not escape? Or was he with you, Sir James?" asked the baronet.

Sir James related the adventures of himself and friend, to which Sir Edward listened gloomily, and then said—

"Gentlemen, I am nearly dead with hunger and thirst—"

"Then say no more, think no more," interrupted Sir James, heartily, as he took the arm of the baronet and led him towards the house. "A starving man can think well of nothing but eating. Our friend, Giles Goodwin has an excellent larder, and a noble cook. We are keeping guard, you see, Sir Edward, as we fear

"Report says your worship would rather fight than eat," said the farmer, as he left the room to order in wine and food.

"Report is a famous liar," began the baronet; but at that moment Madam Harvey entered with Lenora, and as her eyes fell upon the face of the speaker she shrieked and reeled to a chair.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

SIR EDWARD AND THE DWARF.

LADY LENORA—for thus we may now style her—placed the lamp which she was carrying upon the table, and took one of the hands of Madam Harvey in hers—though she carried her left arm in a sling.

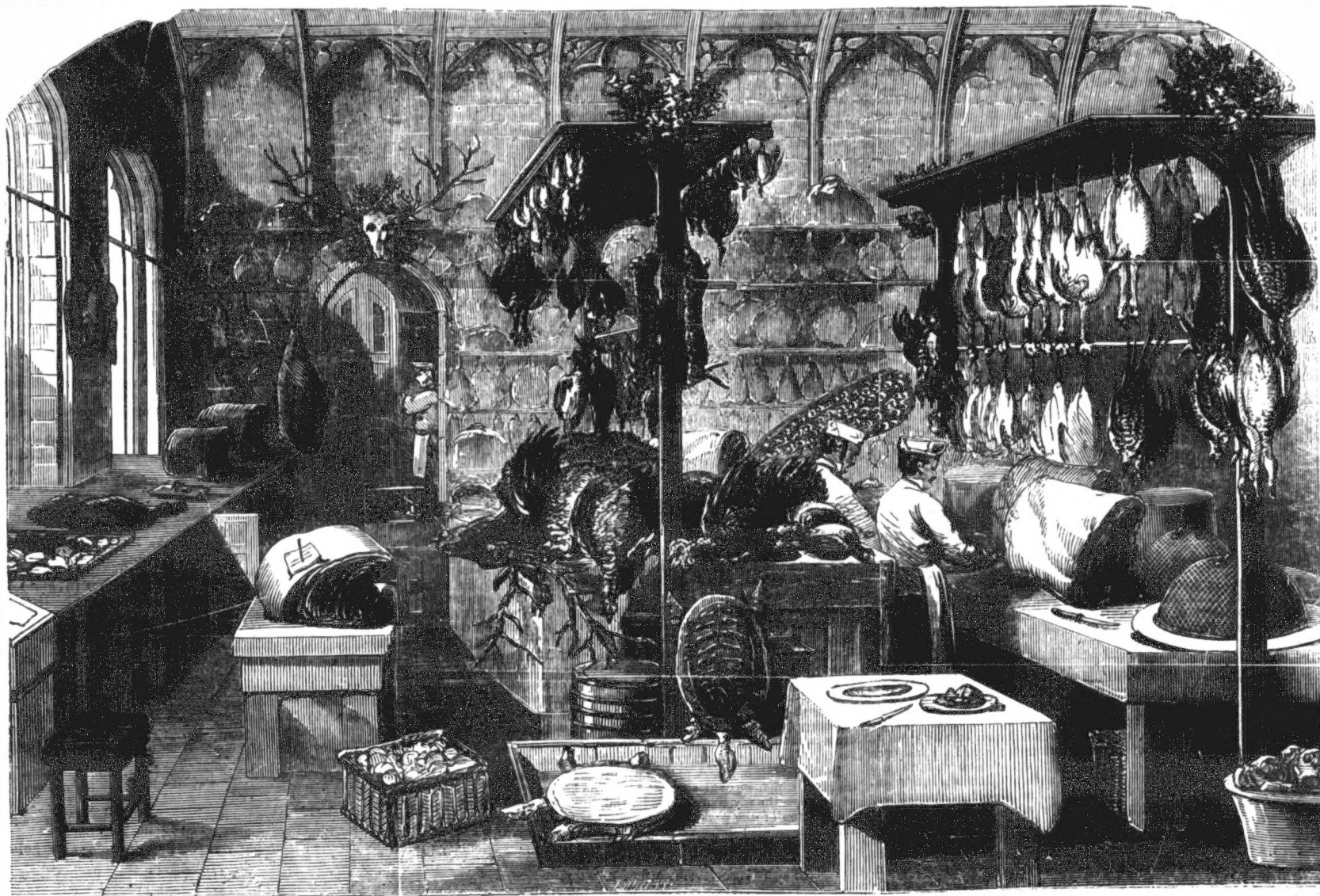
The hand of Madam Harvey was cold and lifeless, for she had swooned.

Sir James hastened to aid Lady Lenora, and hurried from the room to procure restoratives, while Sir Edward gazed wonderingly at the young lady as she stooped over Madam Harvey.

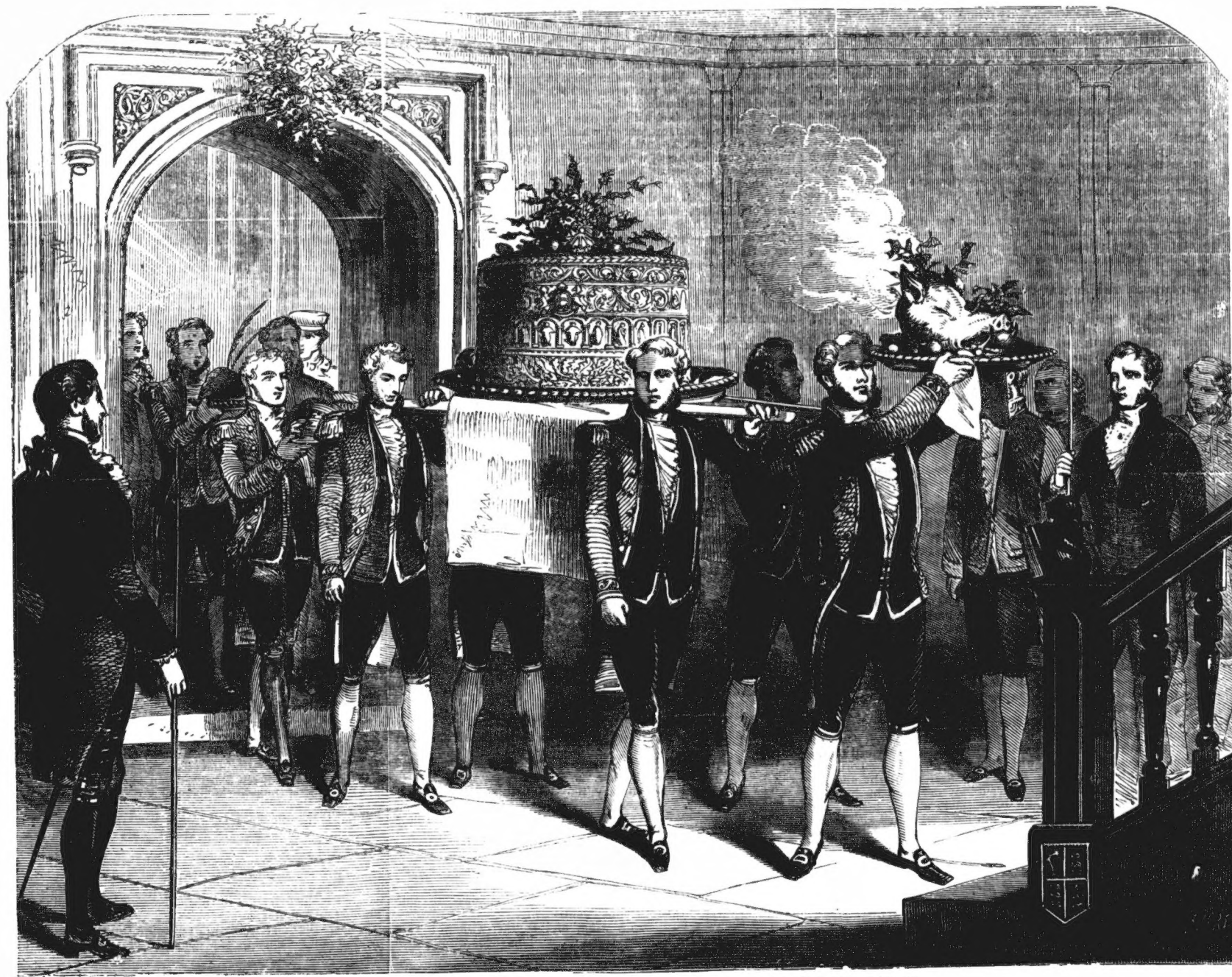
"There is a marvellous resemblance," thought the old cavalier, as he gazed at the beautiful face—"a marvellous resemblance to poor Lady Eleanor Redburn in the face of that young lady. Who is she? Perhaps a granddaughter of old Giles. Eleanor! Poor child! How remarkably this young lady resembles her! What is your name, young lady?" he said aloud, unable to restrain his curiosity. "Pardon an old man's inquisitiveness, my child, but I would fain hear your name."

(To be continued.)





THE LARDER AT WINDSOR CASTLE.



CHRISTMAS AT WINDSOR CASTLE—BRINGING IN THE BOAR'S HEAD.



## DRAWING-ROOM AMUSEMENTS FOR WINTER EVENINGS.

## SYMPATHETIC INK.

The most curious of all kinds of sympathetic ink, is that from cobalt. It is a very singular phenomenon, that the characters or figures traced out with this ink, may be made to disappear and reappear at pleasure; this property is peculiar to ink obtained from cobalt; for all the other kinds are at first invisible, until some substance has been applied to make them appear: but when once they have appeared they remain. To prepare this ink, take zaffre and dissolve it in nitro-muriatic acid, till the acid extracts from it the metallic part or the cobalt which communicates to the zaffre its blue colour; then dilute the solution, which is very acid, with common water. If you write with this liquor on paper, the characters will be invisible; but when exposed to a sufficient degree of heat, they will become green. When the paper has cooled they will disappear. Observe, if the paper be too much heated, they will not disappear at all.

TO MAKE A RING SUSPEND BY A THREAD, AFTER THE THREAD HAS BEEN BURNED.

Soak a piece of thread in common salt and water. Tie it to a ring not larger than a wedding ring. When you apply the flame of a candle to it, it will burn to ashes, but yet sustain the ring.

TO FIND WHETHER ANY GIVEN YEAR IS LEAP YEAR OR NOT.

Divide the given year by 4, if nothing remain it is leap year; but if 1, 2, or 3 remain it shows the number of years after leap year. This rule may be committed to memory in the following lines:—

Divide by 4; what's left shall be,  
For leap year, 0; past, 1, 2, 3.

## EXAMPLE.

Was the year 1819 leap year?—Rejecting the centuries, 19 divided by 4, and three remain; therefore the year 1819 was the third year after leap year.

## THE FIERY FOUNTAIN.

If twenty grains of phosphorus, cut very small, and mixed with forty grains of powder of zinc, be put into four drachms of water, and two drachms of concentrated sulphuric acid be added thereto, bubbles of inflamed phosphated hydrogen gas will quickly cover the whole surface of the fluid in succession, forming a real fountain of fire.

## EXPERIMENTS WITH A MAGIC LANTERN.

## TO REPRESENT A STORM AT SEA.

Provide two strips of glass, whose frames are thin enough to admit both strips freely into the groove of the lantern. On one of these glasses paint the appearance of sea from a smooth calm to a violent storm. Let these representations run gradually into each other, and you will of course observe, that the more natural and picturesque the painting is, the more natural will be the reflection. On the other glass, paint various vessels on the ocean, observing to let that end where the storm is, appear in a state of violent commotion, and the vessels as if raised on the waves in an unsettled position, with heavy clouds about them. You then pass the glasses slowly through the groove, and when you come to that part where the storm is supposed to begin, move them gently up and down, which will give the appearance of the sea and vessels being agitated; increase the motion till they come to the height of the storm. You will thus have a very natural representation of the sea and ships in a calm and storm; as you gradually draw the glasses back, the tempest will subside, the sky appear clear, and the vessels glide gently over the waves. By means of two or three glasses, you may also represent a battle on land, or a naval engagement, with a variety of other pleasing experiments.

## THE SOLAR MAGIC LANTERN.

Make a box, a foot high, eighteen inches wide, and about three inches deep. Two of the opposite sides of this box must be quite open, and in each of the other sides let there be a groove wide enough to admit a stiff paper or pasteboard. You fasten the box against a window on which the sun's rays fall direct. The rest of the window should be closed, that no light may enter. Next provide some sheets of stiff paper, blacked on one side. On these papers cut out such figures as your fancy may dictate; place them alternately in the grooves of the box, with their black sides towards you, and look at them through a large and clear glass prism; and if the light be strong, they will appear to be painted with the most lively colours. If you cut on one of these papers the form of a rainbow, about three-quarters of an inch wide, you will have a very good representation of the natural one. For greater convenience, the prism may be placed on a stand on the table, made to turn round on an axis.

TO PRODUCE THE APPEARANCE OF A SPECTRE ON A PEDESTAL IN THE MIDDLE OF A TABLE.

Enclose a small magic lantern in a box, large enough to contain a small swing dressing-glass, which will reflect the light thrown upon it by the lantern in such a way, that it will pass out at the aperture made at the top of the box, which aperture should be oval, and of a size adapted to the cone of light to pass through it. There should be a flap with hinges, to cover the opening, that the inside of the box may not be seen. There must be holes in that part of the box which is over the lantern, to let the smoke out; and over this must be placed a chafing-dish of an oblong figure, large enough to hold several lighted coals. This chafing-dish, for the better carrying on the deception, may be enclosed in a painted tin box, about a foot high, with a hole at top, and should stand on four feet, to let the smoke from the lantern escape.

There must also be a glass planned to rise up and down in a groove, and so managed by a cord and pulley, that it may be raised up and let down by the cord coming through the outside of the box. On this glass the spectre (or any other figure you please), must be painted in a contracted or squat form, as the figure will reflect a greater length than it is drawn. When you have lighted the lamp in the lantern, and placed the mirror in a proper direction, put the box on a table, and setting the chafing-dish in it, throw some incense, in powder, on the coals. You then open the trap-door, and let down the glass in the groove slowly, and when you perceive the smoke diminish, draw up the glass that the figure may disappear, and shut the trap-door. This exhibition will afford a deal of wonder; but observe, that all the lights in the room must be extinguished; and the box should be placed on a high table, that the aperture through which the light comes out may not be seen.

## SHADOWS.

Behind a transparent screen of white cloth place a very powerful light, from which as the performer, whose image is formed on the screen, recedes, his figure will attain to gigantic proportions; again, when he approaches, and is between the light and the screen, his figure will be more accurately defined; by jumping over the light, he will appear to ascend to a great height, and disappear. By nimble and grotesque movements and attitudes—by the judicious introduction of any animal, &c.—the effect may be considerably heightened, and much laughter be excited.

## CHINESE SHADOWS.

This ingenious instrument consists in moving, by pegs fastened to them, small figures cut out of pasteboard, the joints of which are all pliable, behind a piece of fine painted gauze, placed before an opening in a curtain, in such a manner as to exhibit various scenes according to pleasure; while the opening covered with gauze is illuminated, towards the apartment where the spectators

sit, by means of light reflected back from a mirror, so that the shadows of the pegs are concealed. When it is requisite to cause a figure to perform a variety of movements, it is necessary to have several persons, who must be exceedingly expert. When a snake is to be represented gliding, the figure, which consists of delicate rings, must be directed, at least, by three assistants. This amusement, which one can hardly see the first time without pleasure, is a Chinese invention. Many years ago, Chinese boxes were seen on which such moveable figures were apparent only when the box was held against the light.

## TRICKS WITH CARDS.

## THE DIVINING CARD.

Provide a pack in which there is a long card; open it at that part where the long card is, and present the pack to a person in such a manner that he will naturally draw that card. You then tell him to put it into one part of the pack, and shuffle the cards. You take a pack, and offer the same card in like manner to the second and third persons, taking care that they do not stand near enough to the card each other draws. You then draw several cards yourself, among which is the long card, and ask each of the parties if his card be among those cards, he will naturally say yes, as they have all drawn the same card. You then shuffle all the cards together, cutting them at the long card, you hold it before the first person so that the others may not see it, and tell him that it is his card. You then put it in the pack, shuffle it, and cut it again at the same card, and hold it to the second person. You can perform this recreation without the long card in the following manner. Let any person draw a card, and replace it in the pack. You then make the pass, and bring that card to the top of the pack, and shuffle them without losing sight of that card. You then offer that card to the second person, that he may draw it and put it in the middle of the pack. You make the pass, and shuffle the cards the second time in the same manner, and offer the card to the third person, so again to the fourth or fifth.

## THE FOUR CONFEDERATE CARDS.

A person draws four cards from the pack, and you tell him to remember one of them. He then returns them to the pack, and you dexterously place two under and two on the top of the pack. Under the bottom ones you place four cards of any sort, and then taking eight or ten from the bottom cards, you spread them on the table, and ask the person if the card he fixed on be among them. If he says no, you are sure it is one of the two cards on the top. You then pass those two cards to the bottom; and drawing off the lowest of them, you ask if that is not his card. If he again says no, you take up that card, and bid him draw his card from the bottom of the pack. If, on the contrary, he says his cards are among those you first drew from the bottom, you must dexterously take up the four cards you put under them, and placing those on the top, let the other two be the bottom cards of the pack, which you are to draw in the manner before described.

## THE METAMORPHOSED CARDS.

In the middle of a pack place a card that is something wider than the rest, which we will suppose to be the knave of spades, under which place the seven of diamonds, and under that the ten of clubs. On the top of the pack put cards similar to these, and others on which are painted different subjects, viz:—

- First card.....A bird.
- Second.....A seven of diamonds.
- Third.....A flower.
- Fourth.....Another seven of diamonds.
- Fifth.....A bird.
- Sixth.....A ten of clubs.
- Seventh.....A flower.
- Eighth.....Another ten of clubs.

Then seven or eight indifferent cards, the knave of spades, which is the wide card, the seven of diamonds, the ten of clubs, and the rest any indifferent cards. Two persons are to draw the two cards that are under the wide card, which are the seven of diamonds and the ten of clubs. You take the pack in your left hand, and open it at the wide end, as you open a book, and tell the person who drew the seven of diamonds to place it in that opening. You then blow on the cards, and, without closing them, instantly bring the card which is at the top, and on which a bird is painted, over that seven of diamonds. To do this dexterously, you must wet the middle finger of your left hand, with which you are to bring the card to the middle of the pack. You then bid the person look at his card, and when he has remarked the change, to place it where it was before. Then blow on the cards a second time, and bringing the seven of diamonds, which is at the top of the pack, to the opening, you bid him look at his card again, when he will see it is that which he drew.—You may do the same with all the other painted cards, either with the same person, or with him who drew the ten of clubs. The whole artifice consists in bringing the card at the top of the pack to the opening in the middle, by the wet finger, which requires no great practice. Observe, not to let the pack go out of your hands.

TO SEPARATE THE TWO COLOURS OF A PACK OF CARDS BY ONE CUT.

To perform this amusement, all the cards of one colour must be cut something narrower at one end than the other. You show the cards, and give them to any one that he may shuffle them, then holding them between your hands, one hand being at each extremity, with one motion you separate the hearts and diamonds from the spades and clubs.

## THE FOUR INSEPARABLE KINGS.

Take the four kings, and behind the last of them place two other cards, so that they may not be seen. Then spread open the four kings to the company, and put the six cards at the bottom of the pack.—Draw one of the kings, and put it at the top of the pack. Draw one of the two cards at the bottom, and put it towards the middle. Draw the other, and put it at some distance from the last, and then show that there remains a king at bottom. Then let any one cut the cards, and as their remained three kings at bottom, they will then be altogether in the middle of the pack.

HOW TO TELL A PERSON ANY CARD HE THINKS OF, AND TO CONVEY IT INTO A NUT.

Take a nut, in which burn a hole with a hot bodkin, and with a needle break and extract the kernel. Write the name of a card on a thin piece of paper, and roll it up hard, and put it in the nut, stop the hole with wax, which rub over with a little dust, that the puncture may not be perceived, then let some one draw a card; you must take care it be that which is written on the paper: desire him to break the nut, in which he will find the name of the card he has drawn.

## MISCELLANEOUS CONUNDRUMS.

Why is a cabbage run to seed like a lover?—Because it has "lost its heart."  
Why is a melancholy young lady the pleasantest of all companions?—Because she is always "a-musing."  
Why is a circulating library like a lime-kiln?—Because it "lets out volumes."  
Why is a bird caged like a hardened sailor?—Because he does not care for the "cat."  
Why is the burgh of Edinburgh like a calm succeeding a storm?—Because it comes after Edin (a din).  
Why is a toothless man like a cutler without assistants?—Because he has got no "grinders."  
Why are young ladies generally bad grammarians?—Because few of them are able to "decline" matrimony.  
Why should a bird with a wing, and another without a wing always disagree?—Because there is a difference of a pinion (opinion) between them.

How is bread the first necessary of life?—Because it is always kneaded (needed).

Why should a strict Sabbatarian dislike a rough sea on Sunday?—Because it makes Sabbath—"breakers."

What geological era was the worst in the world's history?—The coal era (cholera).

Why is a sharp nosed woman like the great wall of China?—Because, if "crossed," you are likely to find a "Tartar."

Why was Pharaoh's daughter like a broker?—Because she got a little prophet (profit) by the "rushes" on the banks.

Why are forms like chairs, and ceremonies like carpets?—Because you "sit" upon the one and "stand" upon the other.

Which of the battles in the Crimea was the most unequal?—The one where 40,000 Russians fought at Inkerman (A Tinkerman).

Why should you suppose the wheel of fortune belongs to an omnibus?—Because it is constantly "taking up" and "putting down" people.

When is a good-natured man like a soldier on parade?—When he stands a tease (at ease).

When is a window like a star?—When it is a "skylight."

What constellation most resembles an empty fire-place?—The Great Bear (grate bare).

Why are lovers' sighs like long stockings?—Because they are heigh ho's (high hose).

Why is a sick Jew like a diamond ring?—Because he is a Jew ill (jewel).

Why is a sheriff's officer like a famous Roman emperor?—Because he is a reiser (Cæsar).

Why are Irishmen like the Pope?—Because they make "bulls."

Why is a toll-collector at a bridge like a Jew?—Because he keeps the pass-over (Passover).

What class of people bears a name meaning "I can't improve?"—Mendicant (Mend I can't).

Why is a thing difficult to describe like a chronometer?—Because it is a what (watch) you may call it.

Why is the the Commander-in-Chief like a broker?—Because he is a "Commission" agent.

Why is a man who has had his left arm amputated as perfect as a man with two?—Because he has got his "right (h) and left."

Why is an irritable man like an unskilful doctor?—Because he is apt to lose his patience (patients).

Why is a village cobbler like the parson?—Because he attends to the soles (souls) of the people.

Why is a tooth extracted like a fact forgotten?—Because it is "out of the head."

Why may an omnibus be considered secure from lightning?—Because it has a "conductor."

Why is a pig in a parlour like a house on fire?—Because the sooner it is "put out" the better.

Why is a star like the smallest coin in circulation?—Because it is a far thing (farthing).

Why are thoughtless ladies the very opposite of their mirrors?—Because the one speak without "reflecting," the others "reflect" without speaking.

When may a country gentleman's property be said to consist of feathers?—When his estates are all entails (hen tails).

Why are your teeth like verbs?—Because they are regular, irregular, and defective.

When is a river not a river?—When it is high (eye) water.

What islands ought to be good singers?—The "Canaries."

Why is Richmond like the letter R?—Because it is a little beyond "Kew" (Q).

If ladies were cast adrift on the sea, where should they steer to?—The Isle of "Man."

Why is a map of Turkey in Europe like a dripping pan?—Because there is Greece (grease) at the bottom.

To what part of the world should our hungry population emigrate?—To the "Sandwich" Islands.

Why is Cornwall like an Irishman's shoe?—Because it has Padstow (Pat's toe) in it.

Why is the water in the Liverpool Docks like a respite to a condemned criminal?—Because it flows from Mersey (mercy).

To what town in England should incorrigible scolds be sent?—To "Shrewsbury."

Which is the greatest singing parish in Fife?—"Kettle."

What moss in Lancashire resembles a woman's small talk?—"Chat" moss.

Name a burgh in the west of Scotland, which, deprived of its fashionable residents, becomes one in the east?—Dumbarton deprived of its "ton."

Why is the town of Nottingham like a tangled skein of thread?—Because it is in Notts (knots).

Why is Liverpool like benevolence?—Because it is founded on Mersey (mercy).

Why is the Atlantic like a church?—Because there are isles (aisles) and people's spews (people's pews) in it.

What is the coldest river in England?—The Isis (ice is).

What two towns in France will describe the language of a parent who refuses to give his daughter in marriage?—Ushant, Havre (you shan't have her).

Why should taking the proper quantity of medicine make you sleepy?—Because you take a "dose."

In what colour should your promises be kept?—In violet (involute).

Why is a man who marries twice like the captain of a large vessel?—Because he has a second "mate."

Why is a weavercock like ambition?—Because it is a vane (vain) thing to a spire (aspire).

## ARITHMETICAL PUZZLES.

What is the difference between twice twenty-eight and twice eight and twenty?—Twenty; because twice twenty-eight are fifty-six, and twice eight and twenty are thirty-six.

If the poker, shovel, and tongs cost £1 10s., what would a scuttle full of coals come to?—To ashes.

Two men ate nuts for a wager; the one ate ninety-nine, the other a hundred and won (one), how many did the winner eat more than the loser?—One.

If six pounds of tallow come to four shillings, what will a burning candle come to?—Nought.

What makes a pair of boots?—Two.

Why are twice eleven like twice ten?—Because twice eleven are twenty-two, and twice ten are twenty "too."

Why are twenty shillings gained by a wager equal to a guinea?—Because they are one pound won (one).

## DIFFERENCES AND DISTINCTIONS.

What is the difference between a cashier and a schoolmaster?—One "minds" the "till," the other "tills" the "mind."

What is the difference between an idea and a notion?—An idea is a sudden thought; a notion (an ocean) is a vast expanse of water.

What is the difference between a successful lover and an unsuccessful one?—The one "kisses" his "miss," the other "misses" his "kiss."

What is the difference between a girl of seventeen and an old lady of seventy?—The one is "careless" and "happy," the other is "hairless" and "cappy."

What is the difference in Ireland between reason and treason?—The absent t (absentee).

What is the difference between a Cochin China hen and a slovenly maid-servant?—The one is a domestic "fowl," and the other a "foul" domestic.



## THE FLORENCE SEWING MACHINE.

By the aid of labour-saving machinery, England does the work of 500,000,000 men. With her 20,000,000 for engineers, firemen and assistants, she does more of the world's toll than all the millions of China and India. Who can estimate the amount of brain force that has been expended to bring about this astonishing physical result—that one man in England is equal in producing force to twenty-five men in China and India? This simple fact accounts, in a great measure, for the peerless position which England enjoys in the family of nations.

In the whole range of labour-saving machinery there is no one instrument of such universal utility as the Sewing Machine; we well remember the time when it was thought impossible to produce a machine so nearly human; but, thanks to American genius, the success is perfect, and now one of these instruments, of some sort, is within the means of every family.

It is an astonishing fact, yet a fact, that if the production and sale are kept up at the rate of the past five years, it will not be long before there will be as many sewing machines in use in the United States as there are families to use them—2,000,000 have already been sold. It is far different in England. Here the advantages of labour-saving machines, for the mill and the workshop, are fully appreciated; but the public are only just waking up to the importance of introducing them into the family. The women at home toil on in the old way, "their work is never done." Hood's "Song of the Shirt" is still applicable. They are—

"Sewing at once, with a double thread,  
A shroud as well as a shirt."

When the women once become aware of what a sewing machine will do in lightening their toil, they will copy the example of the women of America—they will demand one as the most economical part of their furniture, and the law here, as there, taking a humane view of the case, will exempt it from seizure for debt.

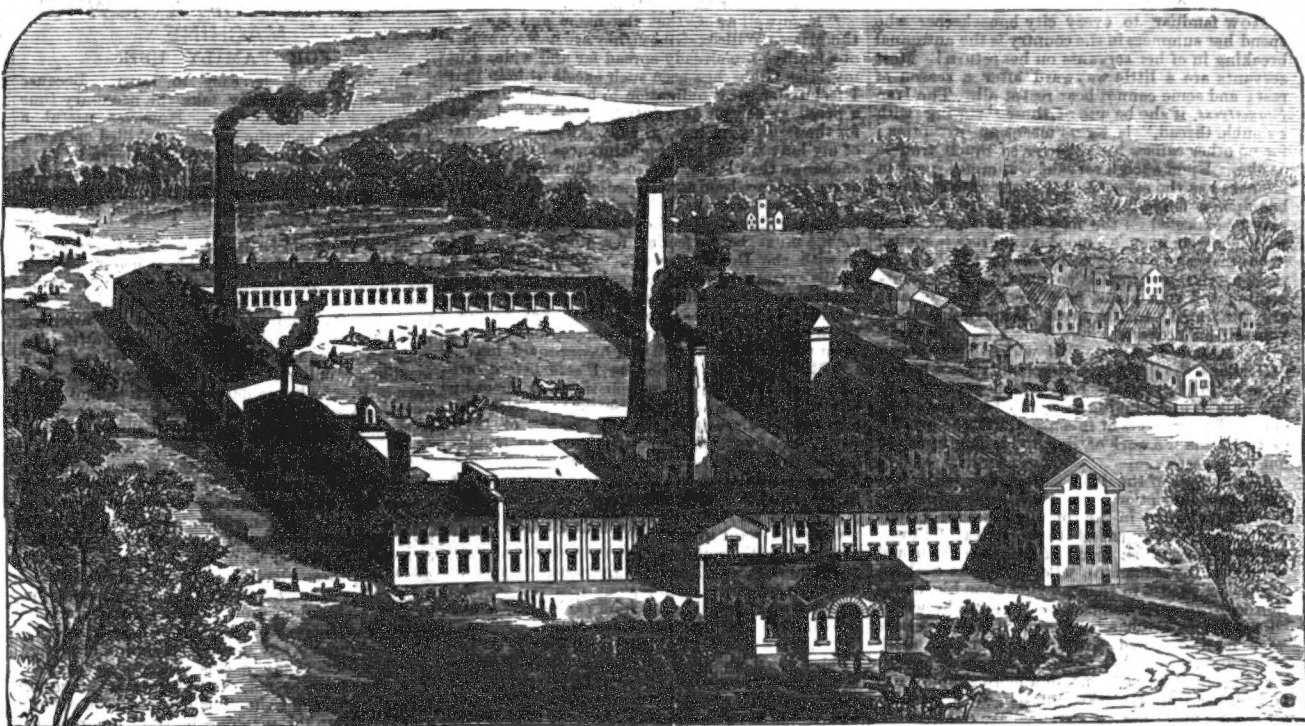
Our weaving and knitting are done by machinery—why not our sewing?

The woman in a mill is equal to twenty-five women in India and China. Why should she be brought to their level at the fireside for the want of such labour-saving implements as are now within the reach of all?

One of these implements is the sewing machine; and for the family the "Florence" is the best.

What it claims for itself is, that it makes four different stitches: the lock, knot, double-lock, and double-knot, each stitch being alike on both sides of the fabric—and that each machine has the reversible feed-motion, enabling the operator, by turning a thumb-screw, to fasten off seams without stopping the machine, or to run the work either to the left or right. The next point is the self-adjusting tension.

These are the main points of excellence claimed for this machine, and the points wherein it differs from other sewing machines; and having stated



THE FLORENCE SEWING MACHINE MANUFACTORY.

them, we will give a short history of the machine itself, and the place of its manufacture.

The original idea of the Florence sewing machine came from Leander W. Langdon, an inventive genius, who was always about machine shops, and always making something after his own notions. Finally, after a variety of singular mechanical successes, he took it into his head to make a sewing machine, and did so. This was in Rochester, U.S., and the same machine is now in the possession of the present Florence Company. After various efforts to bring his machine into notice, he came to Florence, Massachusetts, and brought it before Mr. S. L. Hill, and Mr. D. G. Littlefield. They saw its merit, and the final result was the formation of a company, with a capital of 300,000 dollars, to manufacture it. The fame of the machine spread rapidly, and it became necessary to increase its production. This increase will be understood when it is said that in 1861 only 50 machines were sold; in 1862, 1,100; in 1863, 3,500; and in 1864, 6,000; while now, with a sale of 1,500 per month, the company are adding 200,000 dollars to their capital in order to increase the production of machines in proportion to the demand.

The process of manufacture is simply this:—Upon the first, or ground floor of this immense factory, is the foundry. There all the castings

are made, and on the same floor the japanning is done. This is a most important branch of the manufacture, and—though apparently the rough part only—receives a high degree of attention.

From the finishing and japanning rooms of the first floor we go to those of the second, where all the small parts of the machine are made. There is a nicety of workmanship necessary here that must be seen to be understood. Every part of this beautiful machine is as accurate as those of a watch; and no machine goes from the manufactory without this accuracy and finish. Each of these parts, upon being finished, go to the assembly-room, upon the third floor, where they are put together, and set running by steam power, until all the parts of the machine work smoothly together, after which it is removed to the adjusting-room, on the same floor. In this room it is tried in every way, upon both cotton and silk, and if found to work with accuracy and decision, is removed to the inspecting-room. Here it undergoes another thorough examination in all its parts, and if finally pronounced fit and a perfect machine, it is lowered to the first floor, and there receives its table.

These tables are made of different material—walnut, mahogany, or rosewood, and in great variety of style, in order fully to meet the requirements of trade both at home and abroad.

We have here endeavoured to give a clear and unvarnished account of what we must term a wonderful machine. That it has been appreciated greatly by the public is manifest from the steady increase in its sales. It has not been forced on the public, but has worked its own way. It is not a cheap machine in the common acceptance of the word, but it is still a cheap machine in fact. The cheapest of the Florence machines cost £10, while the same grade of other first-class machines cost £9. But this difference in price is more than made up in extra attachments, which are furnished free of charge with the Florence machine. This is the secret of its cheapness, to say nothing of its capability to do work of every kind. To this admirable machine, which may be considered the most perfect of its kind, the highest premium (Gold Medal) was awarded by the Committee on Sewing Machines at the Exhibition of the American Institute, held at New York, 1865, and again in 1867. It also received the highest award for Family Sewing Machines at the Paris Exposition in 1867.

We are not disposed in this summary to overcommend anything placed before the public for its suffrage, but when we know an article to be good we think we are only doing our duty to say so emphatically.

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Special attention has been devoted to the Comic Scenes. Particularly attractive to the large number of juveniles attending the Palace at holiday times.

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Pickles	0	1
Roll and Butter	0	2
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**ROYAL AGRICULTURAL HALL, ISLINGTON.**—On MONDAY, Dec. 23, this great

place of attraction will OPEN with one of the most costly and novel ENTERTAINMENTS ever offered to the notice of an admiring public. The lessees and managers, Messrs. J. and G. Sanger, have, since their last successful season of the Congress of Monarchs, been actively engaged in obtaining the best talent known to the equestrian, gymnastic, and acrobatic profession. The artistes will include English, French, American, German, Russian, Austrian, Danish, Spanish, Arabian, Japanese, and Chinese. Consequently all the great nations of the earth will have their representatives. The Stud of Horses and Ponies are the finest of any establishment known in the four quarters of the universe. The herds of camels, dromedaries, &c., will take part in this great and exciting exhibition. The splendid stud of thoroughbred racehorses from the stables of the Duke of Beaufort, the Marquis of Hastings, Sir Joseph Hawley, Baron Rothschild, &c., have been purchased for the flat and hurdle racing. Juvenile Racing with petite ponies. Rustic and Rural Sports. Concluding with the stupendous and brilliant spectacle, entitled, ST. GEORGE and the DRAGON—a new and original edition by the proprietors, in which a company and stud of 2,000 will take part, representing those of the Egyptian world. The Ethiopian Band—the Trophy Bearer—the Egyptian Court—the State Broughwhaz of glass and gold, of which 2,000 cubic feet has been purchased, and introduced into this great State vehicle. This large Broughwhaz is stupendous in dimensions, 50 feet in length, and the towering column reaching the enormous height of 60 feet. The Bascho, or Carriage of St. George, of Egyptian columns, sphynx of gold, &c. The costly Dragon Barouche, including all those grand State carriages of Egypt 1,600 years ago, have been manufactured for the occasion, regardless of cost; together with the Great Tribe of Serpents and Serpent-Charmers. This long-talked-of and much read about peculiar race will legitimately go through the whole of their extraordinary evolutions of charming those monster reptiles—a class of entertainment and sight altogether entirely new to four-fifths of the civilised world. The proprietors have, regardless of expense, procured the services of these extraordinary people, consequently they cannot appear at any other establishment. The massive glass Bascho is composed of strong glass of large dimensions, and by artificial heat is kept up to a temperature of 200 degrees, so that the reptiles may possess their full strength for the encounter of charming and capture, the whole of which will take place on the Grand Dais before the Egyptian Court. Grand Fight—The Fiery Dragon—The Exhausted Steed—The Triumph of St. George will be the signal for the Entry and Grand Procession, unprecedented and unapproachable. Nothing of the same magnitude having ever been attempted, it will be found the greatest of all sights and untold beauty and splendour. Two performances daily, commencing at two o'clock and half-past seven o'clock. Doors open one hour previous. Sofa lounges, 4s.; first-class seats, 3s.; stalls, 2s.; pit and promenade, 1s.; gallery, 6d. For the first time, the Royal Agricultural Hall will be heated and made warm and comfortable by the aid of steam pipes. The Grand Illuminations consist of 500,000 jets of gas, massive crystal chandeliers, &c., &c. The statuary, by Brucciani, in burnished gold. The decorations, flags, banners, crests, shields, &c., &c., are superior to those displayed in honour of the Belgian Volunteers.

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## OUR NEW SEAMSTRESS

A TALE WITH A MORAL.

How familiar to every city housekeeper who spend her summers in the country is the autumnal breaking in of her servants on her return! Most servants are a little wayward after a season of rest; and some cannot bear rest at all. The Iron Seamstress, if she be one of those "sewing with a double thread," is by no means an exception; for no other causes her mistress so much trouble as she. Upon such a servant a summer spent in idleness has the same effect that a month in clover has upon a sick horse. In either case a *fracas* may be expected on the first call to work. And when she gets in such a mood, your dress is spoiled in the making; or, for want of its timely completion, you are unable to meet your appointments; and your plans, for a week, or a month, are frustrated, to the great disappointment of yourself and others.

We believe, however, that with all their imperfections the Double-thread family have been a blessing to the world. Full-grown perfection in any human undertaking is not to be expected at once. The progress of invention, like the growth of a plant, is the work of time, and is only wrought out by degrees.

In the case of the Iron Seamstress, there was first the inception, or idea (two threads), crudely embodied in the complex, and for a time impractical instrument of Howe. Next followed a *Trio* of inventors, born of the same faith and wedded to the same idea, who, aiming at nothing higher, succeeded in so improving upon his invention as to adapt it to practical use—in the workshops, and in the hands of such housekeepers as have been endowed with super-feminine skill. Third and last comes a bolder genius—an inventor of original conceptions, of a more simple faith and higher aim. He asked himself, Why is it that all sewing machines yet invented are so often out of order? He finds the cause in their complicated mechanism. And again he traces the cause of that complication to the use of an *extra* thread. Once more he enquires, Is an extra thread necessary? Is it indispensable? Not if a reliable stitch can be made without it. Can this be done? He sets himself at work, and at length succeeds in the invention of a new stitch, made of one thread only, yet as secure as any made of two. The "under-thread"—now no longer necessary—is cast aside, and with it go all the resulting complications. He constructs an instrument embodying the principles thus discovered—and that instrument with its subsequent improvements is now superseding the older ones, which are comparatively clumsy and impracticable.

Thus has the Iron Seamstress grown to her present estate; and who can fail to see that the Double-thread family have performed an important part in bringing about these results? Nor is it to be denied that they have done a vast amount of positive good, particularly in the workshop, as an aid to the labours of men, and in families possessing the requisite skill to use them. But for general household use they are, we think, too complicated.

A lady of our acquaintance, who has had much experience in the employment of this kind of help, and whose decisions we have entire confidence in, has favoured us with a written statement of her experience and conclusions in these words:—"We formerly had in our employ one of these Double-thread seamstresses for several years, another for three years, another for two, and a fourth for one; and I have to confess that my experience with each was nearly the same, and not altogether satisfactory. When my husband was at home to help me out of difficulties, I managed usually to get along pretty well; but when he was absent I was often in trouble, and that trouble was sometimes rendered doubly vexatious by the exalted opinion Miss Double-thread entertained of herself, and the provoking way she had of showing it.

"It offended her to be even suspected of the slightest imperfection, for 'Wasn't she acknowledged to be first class? Wasn't she admitted to the very best society?' Ay, 'Was she not a Double-thread?' Who, then, should say a word disrespectful of her ladyship? 'Was she ever known to rip? Hadn't she a beautiful face—slike on both sides? Didn't the tailors employ her, and the collar manufacturers, and the shirt-makers, and the shoe-makers, and the manufacturers of hats and caps? Who, then, should presume to doubt her superiority?"

"Again, getting on her high-heeled shoes, and raising her voice to a higher pitch—"Who could show such a record as hers—all glorious within and without? or who could sport so many jewels in 'premums' of gold, and silver, and brass? Or, soaring yet higher, 'What seamstress had ever been decked like her with ribbons and garters imperial! with legions of knightly honours received direct from the Emperor's own right hand?"

"Her virtues thus established, objections would be disposed of in a manner equally conclusive: 'What if she did have 'fits' sometimes? Hadn't she a right to that luxury as well as other ladies?' Or, 'What if she did break a few needles daily, and snap the thread occasionally, and confuse things generally? Surely no one should think of complaining of these little failings, since all other first-class seamstresses had the same.' Or 'What if she hadn't any joint in her elbow, and so had to work with a stiff arm, and a curved needle to match it?"

"With these exalted ideas in her head, it was often, as you will readily believe, a difficult task to keep Miss Double-thread at her work, and what work she did was sometimes so badly done that I was obliged to take it all out—a most distressing job. And these difficulties were so frequent and troublesome that, as a choice of evils, I did a large portion of my sewing in those days *by hand*, without calling on Miss Double-thread at all."

"Of course my patience was sometimes sorely tried, and as often I wondered if there could be no remedy. At length relief came in the person of Miss 'Willcox-Gibbs,' a young seamstress of singular virtues and rare accomplishments; and we were amongst the first to give her a trial. The result was so satisfactory that we soon discharged

Miss Double-thread, and invited Miss Willcox-Gibbs to occupy her place, which she has done ever since to our entire satisfaction.

"I am well aware that the name and fame of the Misses Willcox-Gibbs (they are now a numerous family) are already spread far and wide. But my Miss Gibbs has been such excellent help that I feel under great obligation to her, and esteem it a privilege as well as a duty to speak a good word for the family. 'I have already influenced several of my lady friends and acquaintances to make the exchange that I did, and so far the result has in every instance been equally satisfactory. Indeed, it could not well be otherwise, for the Misses Gibbs are all exactly alike; and what is perfection for me must be perfection for others. It is not so with the Double-threads. There may be a family resemblance in looks, but in action and temperament they differ as widely as servants of different nationalities; you therefore never know, when you select a Double-thread seamstress, what you are getting till you have proved her.

"But the Misses Gibbs, as I said before, are all alike. You could not distinguish them by any difference in size, form, feature, or action, in capacity or disposition, in the quality of their work, nor yet by their voice! In the faculty last-named they are quite peculiar. Their conversation is always in a whisper, and so low as not in the least to disturb the conversation of others.

"While on this subject of changing seamstresses, I want to add that the practice is becoming quite common in the circle of my acquaintance, and I am told that a very considerable portion of the applications received for the services of Miss Gibbs are from parties who have previously employed Miss Lock-stitch.

"As to my own experience with Miss Willcox-Gibbs, I can say that, as soon as she was fairly settled in her new home, she went right to work, and in a few days had our wardrobe in complete order, and it has never been otherwise from that day to this, a period of nearly four years. In all that time she has not given the slightest occasion for reproach, nor has she had one 'fit'! Indeed, I am not aware that she has ever been ill for a moment. Certainly we have had no doctor's bills to pay for her, which is a fact of some importance in her favour as compared with any seamstress of the double-thread family that I have ever employed. The amount of bills we paid for our Miss Lock-stitch, on account of surgical and medical advice, was truly frightful. I don't know the exact sum, but I think it exceeded the value of all the work she did for us.

But I have somewhat more to say of Miss Willcox-Gibbs. She minds her own business, has no company, and is always ready for duty. Whenever we intend making a journey, I scarcely have to let her know it, and every garment needed is found ready at the appointed time. So also on our return, the same watchful eye and ready hand go almost instinctively to work, and the wardrobe is again put in order, sometimes long before our other servants get fairly broken in.

"Miss Willcox-Gibbs has also a peculiar faculty for making friends. If, on being introduced at a new place, she happen to meet with a cold reception—as she sometimes does on account of prejudice—it never disconcerts her, and she never fails to dispel that prejudice on a very slight acquaintance. Her quiet, ladylike, and winning way of receiving and treating strangers, has the effect of putting every one at ease in her company. She is a great favourite with children. When not otherwise employed, she often amuses them by making frocks and aprons for their dolls; and no matter how roughly they use her, she never gets out of temper, or becomes otherwise unfit for instant service when her mistress calls.

"She is also on intimate terms with the feeble and the aged, who find in her an agreeable companion and a sympathising friend. She never has any difficulties with the other servants, and I doubt if she has an enemy in the world. Even Miss Lock-stitch, and all the other members of the Double-thread family—though professionally her rivals—are personally her admirers, if not her friends. My own Miss Lock-stitch used often to say:—"What a charming little seamstress Miss Willcox-Gibbs is! If she only had another string to her bow, so that she could go into first class society, how delighted I should be with her company." And though I did not then appreciate her admiration of Miss Willcox-Gibbs, not being acquainted with her myself, I could not help saying, in a half-joking way, 'Never mind, my dear, you may live to see the day when you will wish that you had one string less to your bow!'

"And now, Mr. Editor, though you may not be able to appreciate, as fully as I do, the superiority of my favourite seamstress, I think you must be satisfied that for a large majority of housekeepers, few of whom are blessed, like you, with masculine skill, the Misses Gibbs are just the kind of help wanted.

Most certainly. And now, ye afflicted wives and mothers, who are worrying your lives out with disorderly servants, these words of sisterly council from one who knows your trials, are for you. Would you escape all these troubles? Go and make the exchange that she did, and we have no doubt you will find cause to thank her for her counsel. Don't bother with your refractory Miss Lock-stitch or Miss Double-loop a single year longer. You will have to make the exchange some time. We advise you, then, to do it at once, and thus rid yourself of that useless, troublesome "under-thread" and its attendant complications—its bobbins, and shuttles, and hooks, and rings, and brushes, and circular needles, and spirals, and drivers, and compound tensions, &c. The change once made, and Miss Willcox-Gibbs fairly installed in charge of your wardrobe, your troubles in that department of the household will be over.

You will find that every article of clothing which she makes will stay made, and you will not then need to look over garments, when washing and ironing, to mend the broken stitches. You will find her, as our friend did, a real time-saver, money-saver, and patience-saver—nay more, a faithful and trusty friend.

## PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING

## THE SELECTION OF A SEWING MACHINE FOR FAMILY USE.

1st.—It should be easy to learn. Because ladies will not generally take the necessary time to master a difficult one. However useful a machine may be in the hands of a skilled operator, if an apprenticeship be necessary to learn to work it well—to do good work with it—it will be unused and unprofitable, or, at the best, it will require some person to be specially qualified to do the family sewing.

2nd.—It should be easy to work. Every member of the family should be able to use it, including children and invalids. A good easy running sewing-machine affords pleasant occupation and recreation to children, and assists in teaching them the useful arts of cutting and putting together garments. It can hardly be a family machine, if children cannot use it, and take pleasure in it. Ladies in delicate health cannot have more agreeable and healthful exercise than the occasional use of a proper Family Sewing Machine.

3rd.—It should be easy to change from one kind of work to another. The "Family Use" of a sewing machine consists of all sorts of work, one after another; and generally a change in the work requires some change of the machine. Changes of needle, cotton, or both, are frequent. In some machines these changes are easily made; but in others they require time and the careful attention of even a skilful operator. Before buying, a lady should always set the needle herself, notice whether there is any liability of setting it wrong, whether there is any means of knowing whether it is set wrong or not, and the consequences of setting it wrong; she should remove the cotton, and thread up the machine herself; and remember that these changes and many more may occur just when she has little time to lose, as she "must get her work out of the way." She should use the hemmers also; see whether they turn the hems and falls under, as in sewing by hand, or up on the right side, causing a garment to appear wrong side out.

4th.—It should be easy to keep in order. It should require only cleaning and oiling, and should not require skill to do even that. It should never require to be taken to pieces for any purpose whatever; it should be so contrived that no part need be removed to get at any other part. If any derangement occur, as will occasionally be the case in all machinery, both the difficulty and the remedy should be so obvious that no serious consequences can follow. The machine should right itself, when the obstacle is removed.

5th.—It should be simple in its mechanism. A skilful saleswoman can display the attractive features of any machine, and hide its defects. A lady should try to learn to use a few of the best machines before buying. She will not then need the caution against a complicated one, having learned a timely lesson from its continual derangements.

6th.—It should be noiseless. The old, heavy, cumbersome, noisy style of machinery, is very unwelcome in the home circle. A noiseless machine does not interrupt reading or conversation.

7th.—It should be so well made as to require no repairs. The best made machines, when worked by steam power for manufacturing purposes, will wear out in a few years, but in family use they will last a generation.

8th.—It should do all kinds of work well and make a strong, secure, and beautiful seam that will stand washing, ironing, and wear. Some machines do light work well, others heavy work; rarely both equally well. In regard to the kind of stitch, one should not act upon the opinion of any other person. She should subject the different stitches to actual test, and judge for herself.

9th.—It should make the best stitch. There are four kinds of stitch in common use: the chain stitch, the lock stitch, the Grover and Baker stitch, and the Willcox and Gibbs stitch. The chain stitch is made only by the "cheap machines," and is believed to be quite worthless; at least, the machines are, for they drop stitches and are otherwise defective; it may therefore be left out of the comparison.

The lock stitch is made by two threads, one lying nearly straight on the under surface of the work (except on thick cloth, when it is nearly alike on both sides), the other passing through the material and crossing the under thread. This stitch is preferred on leather, and is much used on heavy cloth, but on thinner materials, the seam is less satisfactory on account of its inelasticity, and the difficulty of equalising the tensions of the two threads.

The Grover and Baker stitch is made by two threads looped together, one of which passes through the cloth and with the other forms a ridge upon the under side; the under thread is much finer than the upper, in order to make the ridge as light as possible. This is an excellent embroidery stitch, the most showy of all. It is also in use for general purposes, having an advantage over the lock stitch in being secure and at the same time easily taken out when desired. The mechanism by which both this and the lock stitch are made, is, however, very complicated, and much skill is requisite to use it successfully.

The Willcox and Gibbs stitch is made by one thread direct from the reel by means of a very simple mechanism, which does its work with greater certainty than any other, and almost entirely without noise. Each loop grasps the preceding one and is firmly twisted around it. The seam is fastened off by taking two stitches beyond the cloth. This ties a firm knot. When the fastening is required before coming to the end, it is done by simply drawing the thread backward upon the seam. It is the strongest, most secure, and the most beautiful stitch known. If three tucks be made side by side with the three stitches respectively, and cut across at short distances, and the cloth pulled, the lock stitch gives way first by the drawing out of the stitch, the Grover and Baker next by the breaking of the under thread, the Willcox and Gibbs last.

There is nothing in the whole range of labour-saving inventions that has given more universal and entire satisfaction, than the Willcox and Gibbs Family Sewing Machine. The following statements with regard to it substantially embody the decision of the Judges at the Grand Trial of Sewing Machines of 1865.

1. It is the simplest.
2. It is the least liable to get out of order.
3. It is the best made machine.
4. It is the cheapest.
5. It is strictly noiseless.
6. It works the easiest.
7. It works the fastest.
8. It cannot be turned backward.
9. It requires the least mechanical skill to operate it.
10. It requires the least time and instruction to learn to use it.
11. It is the most certain and reliable in operation.

NOTE.—It is a fact worthy of remark, that during the entire trial—which continued without intermission for nearly seven hours—not a stitch was missed, nor the cotton once broken, nor a needle broken or bent, by the Willcox and Gibbs Machine. No kind of work was tried upon it that was not accomplished, and done in a perfect and workmanlike manner; and no trial was made that was not entirely successful.

12. The needle is the shortest.
13. The needle is straight.
14. The needle is bevelled.
15. The needle is secured in its place by a patented device, which renders it self-adjusting, so that neither skill nor experience is necessary in setting it. It is not so with any other.
16. It uses but one thread, and thus avoids the necessity of complicated machinery, which is required for two threads.
17. It sews directly from the reel, thus making it unnecessary to re-wind the thread.
18. It makes the "Willcox and Gibbs stitch"—a stitch original with this machine [and made by no other except by those licensed by the Willcox and Gibbs Sewing Machine Company], which for general purposes is superior to any other.

NOTE.—The trial upon this claim was very thorough, and the practical tests minute and accurate. Each machine was required to use cotton from the same reel, make the stitch of the same length, and perform the test-work on the same piece of cloth, with the lines of sewing side by side. The results were decisive, and in every test in favour of the Willcox and Gibbs.

19. The seam has the peculiar advantage of being readily taken out when desirable, while it is less liable to rip, in use or wear, than the lock-stitch.

NOTE.—This claim also was very severely tested, in the same manner as the last, and with equally positive results—in favour of the Willcox and Gibbs.

20. The seam is more elastic, and stronger than the lock-stitch.
21. The seam is more even and beautiful.
22. The seam is self-fastened.
23. The tension is more easily adjusted than that of any other.
24. It will do a greater variety of work than any other can do in equal perfection.
25. It is more easily and speedily changed from one kind of work to another.
26. More work can be done with it in a given time than with any other.
27. It embroiders beautifully.
28. It has a shield to protect the operator's dress from the wheel.
29. The needle being secured in a vertical bar, it has important advantages over machines with curved needles attached directly to the needle-arm.
30. In consequence of the shorter sweep of the needle, there is much less wear of the cotton from its vibrating through the needle's eye in the act of sewing.
31. A smaller needle can be used with the same size of cotton, which adds to the strength and beauty of the seam, especially on linen or other hard materials.
32. It has the best hemmers.
33. It has the best feller.
34. It has the best braider.
35. It has the best belt.

In regard to the decision of the judges upon the several points, it may be remarked that during the entire trial there was scarcely an instance of difference of opinion. For, by separating the respective merits of each machine into elements, or "points," and subjecting each point separately to the test of practical work done on each machine in presence of the judges, their decision upon each point was reduced to the simple act of recording the facts developed.

For instance: each contestant claims the most elastic stitch. Then each is required to sew a seam, side by side on the bias of a piece of elastic goods; and the judge takes the piece, and stretches it lengthwise of the seams, till one seam breaks; he still continues the stretching, but the other seam refuses to break at all. However disappointed his expectations, the judge will hardly enter on the record that the broken seam is the more elastic.

Such were the tests and such the inevitable decisions. After a contest of nearly seven hours, the Willcox and Gibbs was declared to be the Best Sewing Machine.

Samples of work and price list sent free.

Unlimited Instructions free to all, whether buyers or not.

All are invited to come and try our machine.

The public are cautioned against imitations of our machine in the form of the letter G, our Trade Mark.

WILCOX & GIBBS  
SEWING MACHINE COMPANY,  
135, REGENT-STREET (W.), LONDON;  
16, CROSS-STREET, MANCHESTER;  
122, BOLD-STREET, LIVERPOOL.